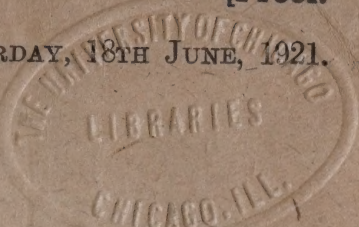


No. 74.

[ISSUED SATURDAY, 18TH JUNE, 1921.]

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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Parliament

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION, 1920-21.

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# EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

FIRST SESSION.

## Governor-General.\*

His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY WILLIAM, BARON FORSTER, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

\* From 6th October, 1920.

## Australian National Government.

(From 10th January, 1918.)

Prime Minister and Attorney-General	..	The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, P.C., K.G.
Minister for the Navy	..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Honorable W. H. Laird Smith (28th July 1920).
		The Right Honorable Lord Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
Treasurer	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (27th March, 1918).†††
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G. (28th July, 1920).
Minister for Defence	..	The Honorable George Foster Pearce.
Minister for Repatriation	..	The Honorable Edward Davis Millen.
Minister for Works and Railways	..	The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom (27th March, 1918)
Minister for Home and Territories	..	The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.†††
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Honorable Alexander Poynton (4th February, 1920)
Minister for Trade and Customs	..	The Honorable Jens August Jensen†
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (13th December, 1918).
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (17th January, 1919).
Postmaster-General	..	The Honorable William Webster†††
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Honorable George Henry Wise (4th February, 1920).
Minister for Health	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (10th March, 1921).
Vice-President of the Executive Council	..	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom.
		<i>Succeeded by</i>
		The Honorable Edward John Russell (27th March, 1918).
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Edward John Russell.
		Appointed Vice-President of the Executive Council, 27th March, 1918.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton.
		Appointed Minister for Home and Territories, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable George Henry Wise.
		Appointed Postmaster-General, 4th February, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Walter Massy Greene.*
		Appointed Minister for Trade and Customs, 17th January, 1919.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Richard Beaumont Orchard.**
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Sir Granville de Laune Ryrie, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D.††
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable William Henry Laird Smith.††
		Appointed Minister for the Navy, 28th July, 1920.
Honorary Minister	..	The Honorable Arthur Stanislaus Rodgers.***

\* Appointed 26th March, 1918.—† Removed from office, 13th December, 1918.—\*\* Resigned office, 31st January, 1919.—†† Appointed 4th February, 1920.—††† Resigned 3rd February, 1920.—†††† Resignation from office gazetted, 15th June, 1920.—\*\*\* Appointed 28th July, 1920.

## Senators.

(From 1st July, 1920.)

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.

Chairman of Committees—Senator Thomas Jerome Kingston Bakhap.

*Adamson, John, C.B.E. (Q.)	*Glasgow, Sir Thomas William, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (Q.)
Bakhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston (T.)	*Guthrie, James Francis (V.)
*Benny, Benjamin (S.A.)	*Guthrie, Robert Storrie (S.A.)
Bolton, William Kinsey, C.B.E., V.D. (V.)	Henderson, George (W.A.)
<sup>3</sup> Buzacott, Richard (W.A.)	Keating, Hon. John Henry (T.)
*Cox, Charles Frederick, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (N.S.W.)	*Lynch, Patrick Joseph (W.A.)
Crawford, Thomas William (Q.)	Millen, Hon. Edward Davis (N.S.W.)
De Largie, Hon. Hugh (W.A.)	*Millen, John Dunlop (T.)
*Drake-Brockman, Edmund Alfred, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (W.A.)	<sup>1</sup> Newland, John, C.B.E. (S.A.)
*Duncan, Walter Leslie (N.S.W.)	*Payne, Hon. Herbert James Mockford (T.)
Earle, Hon. John (T.)	<sup>2</sup> Pearce, Hon. George Foster (W.A.)
*Elliott, Harold Edward, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M. (V.)	<sup>1</sup> Plain, William (V.)
Fairbairn, George (V.)	Pratten, Herbert Edward (N.S.W.)
Foll, Hattil Spencer (Q.)	Reid, Matthew (Q.)
<sup>2</sup> Foster, George Matthew (T.)	<sup>1</sup> Rowell, James, C.B., V.D. (S.A.)
*Gardiner, Albert (N.S.W.)	*Russell, Hon. Edward John (V.)
*Givens, Hon. Thomas (Q.)	Senior, William (S.A.)
	Thomas, Hon. Josiah (N.S.W.)
	<sup>5</sup> Vardon, Edward Charles (S.A.)
	*Wilson, Reginald Victor (S.A.)

<sup>1</sup> Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 21st July, 1920. <sup>2</sup> Elected 13th December, 1920. <sup>3</sup> Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 26th February, 1920. <sup>4</sup> Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 1st July, 1920. <sup>5</sup> Appointed by State Governor in Council, 13th February, 1921. Sworn 6th April, 1921.



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men who had to leave their holdings because they could not cope with the ravenous dingoes that were destroying their stock. This menace is felt, not only by the sheep-owners, but also by the cattle-raisers. There is a great area of country in the more remote portions of the Commonwealth that could be carrying sheep but for the dingo menace. These pests can be held in check only if the settlers are able to procure fencing material cheaply. The necessity for getting rid of these wild dogs is so great that any benefit that might accrue to the Commonwealth from the employment of men in the manufacture of wire and wire netting will be nullified by the harm done to the pastoral industry if the cost of this material is increased. On the fringe of the Nullarbor Plains, dingoes are present in such numbers that it is almost impossible for men to take up land south of the transcontinental railway. The same condition of affairs exists from 100 miles north of the line to the Canning stock route, south of the Kimberleys, where there is excellent grazing land. During the good seasons in the last twelve years the dingoes have multiplied so much that settlement is impracticable until means of fighting the pest are provided. There is no more effective means than cheap fencing.

Mr. CHARLTON.—What do the dingoes live on in that desert?

Mr. FOLEY.—The country of which I am speaking is not desert, but good pastoral land, which can be utilized under favorable conditions. One of those conditions is an adequate supply of wire netting and barbed wire at reasonable prices. It would be of greater benefit to Australia if, during the next five years, this material were admitted free of duty, so that the dingo pest might be brought into subjection, than if a high duty were imposed to continue in employment a few hundred men in the wire-making industry.

Mr. WEST (East Sydney) [9.43].—I have never heard so much misery related to any body of men as I have heard this evening. Listening to some honorable members, one would think that men on the land are starved to death. Studying the probate returns, I find that invariably the men connected with the land

leave ample fortunes to their children, whilst city men leave very little. Speakers at Nationalist meetings and the press are always advising that the immigrants shall be placed on the land. If the new arrivals were to read *Hansard*, and believe the statements made by some honorable members in the Corner in regard to the misery of the people on the land, very few of them would leave the cities. The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has proposed to reduce the British preferential duty on barbed wire from 68s. to 40s. Apparently the honorable member is willing to inflict on the farmers the burden of that 40s. Australian-made wire netting is worth from £5 to £6 per mile more to the farmer than the foreign-made product, for the reason that the latter has been subjected to tight rolling. This injures the galvanized covering and opens the way to rust. There is a considerable difference in the life of the Australian-made netting and of the foreign manufacture. It seems to me that overseas makers have a wrong idea of the Australian market. They still seem to think that this is a black man's country, and that any old rubbish will do. I hate to listen to the dreadful tales spun by country members in this House. The worst part of a country member's responsibilities is having to open letters from his constituents in which they plead with him to get jobs for their sons on the city tramways or in the Police Force. They think that, although their own work is a joke, the city man's life is easier still. They think that the man in town does no work in the morning, that he attends a picture show in the afternoon, and reads a book over the fire and goes to bed early at night. I assure honorable members in the Corner, if they have not seen it for themselves, that men in the city and suburbs work a good deal harder than the farmers, and very many of them in confined spaces and amidst unhealthy surroundings. Life in the country is not work; much of it is pure pleasure in the beautiful open air. The farmer does a bit of ploughing and tosses a bit of seed about. Then he sits on his verandah and watches the rain and lets Providence do the rest, while his sons go out with guns after rabbits. Farming is an easy thing for any man to put his money into. It



is a different story with the patriotic city man who sinks his money in a factory. Let him start a wire-netting enterprise. The amount of money he makes out of it after meeting all calls from every source, is an absolute moiety. There is more pay-out than get-back, and a lot more risk than gain. I appeal to country members to stop drawing these harrowing pictures of out-back misery. This country cannot prosper if everybody wants to make easy money on the land. We should encourage the people who are willing to risk their wealth in industries.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Work in factories is much easier than the work of the man on the land.

Mr. WEST.—What nonsense! Those connected with the manufacture of wire netting have informed me that the present duties are inadequate to protect them from the competition of English and American makers. America is dumping her goods in the world's markets as she has never done before. For a hundred years her statesmen devoted themselves to making their country self-contained, and its progress should be an object lesson to us. It is foolish to think that our people benefit by buying cheaply on the other side of the world. Our farmers get better value when they buy Australian-made wire netting and wire than when they buy imported material. As the shipping companies charge for transport by measurement and not by weight, the wire that is sent here is packed so tightly that it cannot be as good as the Australian-made wire. The honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) has pointed out that it is only when the Tariff is being discussed that we hear of the misery suffered by those on the land. This outpouring of sympathy for the farmers and graziers can be overdone, like an electioneering cry. I do not believe that our country population is so badly off. We should not be pessimistic in our utterances. We should encourage our people to make light of their burdens, as did the pioneers, who thought nothing of having to go a mile for water, and who "humped their blueys" to get to places to which their successors are now carried in trains. It cannot be said of me that I have not tried to do all I can to make Australia prosperous and its people happy.

Unfortunately, a Tariff discussion brings out all the selfishness of human nature. The honorable member who has moved this reduction supported a duty of £6 a ton on onions, and he and others of his party would like to increase the price of wheat to 10s., and even 15s. a bushel. He should be prepared to help others as his constituents have been helped. If the spirit of mutual helpfulness prevailed, the Tariff would soon be passed, and our work would bring prosperity to the country.

Mr. LAZZARINI (Werriwa) [10.10].

—I hope that the Committee will not agree to the proposed reduction of this duty. The burden of the argument of the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley) was that during the last twelve years dingoes have so increased in number that if people on the land cannot obtain barbed wire disaster awaits them very soon. If that be so, I might ask what people on the land were doing when barbed wire was imported before the war, and when they had to contend with the dingoes? Probably the reason why dingoes have increased in numbers to such an extent as to become a pest is that during the five years of the war the primary producers were at the tender mercy of the callous importer who obtained stocks of barbed wire at a reasonable price before the war, and then taking advantage of the dislocation of trade and shipping put up the price to such an extent as to place the article beyond the reach of the smaller men on the land. Do honorable members opposite desire that the man on the land should be for ever at the mercy of importing rings in this country and combines abroad? If so, they are the enemies and not the friends of the primary producer. The interests of the man on the land can be best served by the production in this country under reasonable protection of the articles he requires. If local manufacturers demand unduly high prices for the articles they produce the Government can protect the Australian consumer from them. If the arguments used by the honorable member for Kalgoorlie and the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) are sound they should be asking, not for the reduction of this duty



by a few shillings per ton, but for the free importation of this article. To be consistent they should demand that it should be admitted free. One honorable member of the Country party, I think the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming), said that this duty should be reduced even if it meant the destruction of the local industry. If that course were followed, all the barbed wire in Australia would be imported, and the duty would then be a purely revenue duty, which the farmer would be called upon to pay. There are some articles which I do not think should be liable to duty, but this is an article which can be manufactured in Australia, and its manufacture here should be protected. I support the duties as introduced by the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene), and I hope the amendment will be defeated. I rose to justify the vote I intend to give, and as one who claims to have as many primary producers in his electorate as can be claimed by any other honorable member of the Committee, I am prepared to stand by the vote I intend to give.

**Mr. GIBSON** (Corangamite) [10.16].—We are confronted by an anomalous position in this Tariff. I can scarcely understand what can be the desire of the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene). After we impose duties this afternoon of 25 per cent., 30 per cent., and 35 per cent. on 14-gauge wire, the Minister, by his proposal, makes impossible the manufacture of barbed wire from 14-gauge wire for which there is quite as big a sale in Australia as there is for 12-gauge wire. The man who manufactures barbed wire from 12-gauge wire is called upon to pay duties of 68s., 85s., and 105s. per ton, whilst a man who manufactures barbed wire from 14-gauge wire is actually called upon to pay £10, £13, and £14 per ton duty on his wire. That position is untenable. I know that the argument is used that those who manufacture barbed wire draw the wire, but that is not so, and the anomaly that has been created plays into the hands of the big manufacturer, whilst the man in the country manufacturing barbed wire with a small plant will find it impossible to carry on when he has to pay up to £14 per ton duty for his wire. I ask

the Minister to recommit the item covering 14-gauge wire. It was passed through rather hurriedly, and honorable members had not a chance to consider it.

**Mr. GREENE.**—If, on inquiry, we find that we have included wires required for these other purposes, I shall recommit the item referred to. It was not our intention to include those wires. I admit that the honorable member's contention is quite correct, if we did include them in the item referred to.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—I should like to see some consideration given to the small manufacturer. Under the duties now proposed, he will be wiped out completely.

**Mr. GREENE.**—I repeat that if we included the wires of which the honorable member is speaking in the amendment I moved, I shall take action to remove them. We did not intend that they should be included.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—The position is that 12, 13, and 14 gauge wires are chiefly used for the manufacture of barbed wire, and the 14-gauge wire is used to just as great an extent as the 12-gauge wire. The man who is not drawing his own wire, but has a small plant for the manufacture of barbed wire, will be wiped out of existence if the present proposal is agreed to.

**Mr. GREENE.**—I assure the honorable member that if we have done that it was not our intention to do it, and I will agree to recommit the item.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 158—

Wire netting, per ton, British, 68s.; intermediate, 85s.; general, 105s.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [10.21].—I did not press for a division upon the last amendment, because I realized that a majority of the Committee were opposed to it, and because the item did not amount to a very great deal. But I now ask that wire netting from the United Kingdom shall be admitted free, and that the duty under the intermediate and general Tariff shall be 10 per cent. The Government should make good with a bounty.

**Mr. GREENE.**—The honorable member has the Inter-State Commission against him.



Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister has taken so little notice of the recommendations of that body that it is strange he should now make a suggestion of that kind. I move—

That the following words be added to the item:—"And on and after 10th June, 1921, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 10 per cent.; general, 10 per cent."

I ask the Minister to consent to report progress.

Mr. GREENE.—If the honorable member will give me an undertaking that he will help me to get up to item 165 to-morrow I will do so.

Mr. GREGORY. — I do not think there will be any difficulty in reaching that item to-morrow.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

## House of Representatives.

Friday, 10 June, 1921.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter) took the chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

### WAR SERVICE HOMES.

Mr. CAMERON.—Will the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation state the attitude of the War Service Homes Commissioner towards occupants of War Service homes who are temporarily embarrassed owing to sickness or other causes, and thus unable to meet their obligations for the moment? In some cases, men so situated are receiving from the Department seven days' notice that they must pay their rent or go out.

Mr. RODGERS.—Under the law, no returned soldier can receive seven days' notice to vacate his home. The law forbids any action being taken against any soldier in default until three months have expired, and then it is the practice of the Department to give at least three notices. Under these circumstances no case of hardship is likely to occur. However, I assure the honorable member that when it is made known to the Department that any person, owing to adverse circum-

stances, such as ill-health, is temporarily unable to meet his obligations, no drastic action will be taken against him.

### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE'S REPORTS.

Mr. GREGORY.—I lay on the table the reports of the Public Works Committee, together with the minutes of evidence, on proposals for the construction of a telephone trunk line between Brisbane and Sydney, for the erection of Ordnance and other Defence buildings at Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, and for the establishment of automatic telephone exchanges at Albion and Newmarket, Brisbane.

Ordered to be printed.

### PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Northern Territory—Report of the Acting Administrator 1919-20.

Reparation Terms accepted by Germany—Telegraphic summary of.

Ordered to be printed.

War Service Homes Act—Land acquired under, in New South Wales, at—Granville, Greenwich, Waratah (2), Yass.

### TELEPHONE MATERIAL.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—I ask the Postmaster-General whether this statement, which appears in to-day's *Age*, is correct—it is a portion of the evidence of the manager of Metal Manufactures Limited, Port Kembla, given before a Select Committee in New South Wales—

In view of recent official statements that telephone orders had been held up owing to a lack of supplies of copper wire, witness surprised the Committee by stating that his firm manufactured 100 tons of copper wire a month, and that the Department used about 500 tons a year. They could give them 1,200 tons a year. They had written to the Department in Melbourne, and had circularized the Deputy Postmasters-General in each State that they would be glad of orders.

If so, will the right honorable gentleman take steps to secure an ample supply of material, and carry out works, some of which have been held up for four years owing to lack of material—works such as the North Coast metallic circuit?

Mr. WISE.—I shall make inquiries about the statement in the *Age*, which I



have not yet seen. The Department has already anticipated practically the whole of the vote for next year in ordering material so that it may be ready for use.

### TASMANIAN MAIL SERVICE.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK** (Parramatta—Acting Prime Minister and Treasurer) [11.7].—(*By leave.*)—The Government have concluded a new Tasmanian mail contract. We have been in negotiation for some time past with the shipping companies concerned, and it has not been easy to secure an agreement.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—Does the new contract effect any economy?

**Sir JOSEPH COOK.**—If economy means lower prices there is no economy in sight in connexion with this agreement as in connexion with most other contracts to perform services for the Government.

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.**—Even the *Age* is dearer now than it was last month.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK.**—Our negotiations have been with representatives of Messrs. Huddart Parker and the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, those companies arranging in combination for the service. Having investigated their figures, having seen their books, and having made as thorough an examination of the case as we could, we have satisfied ourselves that even with an increased subsidy the service will be run without a profit. It seems extraordinary that with a subsidy twice that paid under the pre-war contract, no profit will be made by the companies, but having investigated the whole of the figures, I feel certain that the service will be carried out without profit. That is not an exaggeration; my statement is a result of careful deliberation, and is under the mark. The companies would prefer to have no mail contract, but the Government has persuaded them to accept a subsidy for the continuance of the mail service. They would prefer to run their steamers without being tied down to the conditions of a mail contract, managing the service according to circumstances, and to the greatest commercial advantage. However, Ministers felt that Tasmania has the same right to a direct and frequent mail service as any other State, and we have taken the steps

necessary to secure it to the people of that State. I regret that the new steamer which was ordered during the war is not to be employed to give a better service than there was before; as in the case of the Orient mail contract, we must be satisfied in these days with a service not better than the pre-war service. I hope that conditions may soon so change that we may increase these facilities, and give the people the better services to which they are entitled. The war is still over all these matters, not only in the direction of increasing the cost, but in multiplying the difficulties of conducting these businesses. The companies would have preferred to have nothing to do with the mail contract. They would rather have carried our mails on the poundage system, and have used their boats with a view to obtaining the best commercial advantages available. It is our duty, however, to try—as we have endeavoured to do in the past—to secure a service for Tasmania conducted with such ships as are capable of coping with the passenger traffic and of maintaining a good speed. With the present rates for fares and freights, the difference between the earnings and the running costs of the ships was so great that it could not be met wholly by an increased mail subsidy. It has been agreed, accordingly, that the rates for freight shall be raised by 2s. 6d. per ton—which is 16½ per cent.—while the fares will be increased by 20 per cent. These increases make the rates approximately the same as those now existing in respect of the Australian coastal shipping services generally. The companies will have the right to review the rates of fares and freights after six months; but any further increase must be approved by the Postmaster-General. We cannot get them to agree to the subsidy without that right of review after having given the contract a test. I said, in my opening remarks, that the firms were likely to make no profit. I will say now that they are facing a distinct loss.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—Will the Government claim the same right of review?

**Sir JOSEPH COOK.**—I understand so. The old contract provided for a mail subsidy of £15,000 per annum when the *Nairana* was brought into use. Under the agreement now to be made, the mail subsidy will be increased to £30,000. The contract will provide for a service of three trips a week between Melbourne and



Launceston for seven months of the year, and for two trips a week for the remaining five months. Between Melbourne, Burnie, and Devonport there will be two trips a week throughout the year. The contract will be for a period of twelve months, and will be continued thereafter subject to either party having the right to give twelve months' notice of its termination. I take this earliest opportunity of making the House acquainted with the terms of the contract, which were concluded only yesterday. The whole matter will be submitted to Parliament later.

**Mr. CHARLTON** (Hunter) [11.13] (*by leave*).—This is a very important matter, and I sincerely hope the House will be given the fullest opportunity of discussing it.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—The Postmaster-General (Mr. Wise) will give notice to that end at once.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—I am gratified to hear it. The change in the contract is very drastic, seeing that the amount of the subsidy to be paid is to be doubled, and that there is provision also for increased passenger fares and freights. The Acting Prime Minister pointed out, of course, that those increases would be in accordance with the rates now prevailing along the Australian coast. But in fully discussing the whole subject it will be the duty of honorable members to see that the best interests of the whole of the people of Australia are conserved.

#### COCKATOO ISLAND DOCKYARD.

**Dr. EARLE PAGE**.—I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether, in connexion with the resumption of work at Cockatoo Island, the Government are setting out to get work done and to pay wages therefor, or whether they are proceeding to pay wages and to find work as a reason for the payment.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—The Government are setting out to put the whole business under the best management possible, giving as free a hand as may be conceded in the discharge of the work carried on at the Dockyard.

**Mr. BELL**.—Have they not had a very free hand there in the past?

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—Yes, that has been my trouble—too free a hand, indeed, for my finances.

**Mr. MAHONY**.—Does not the Acting Prime Minister think he should wait,

before making comments like that, until he has had our report?

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—The honorable member wants work to be begun at Cockatoo Island, and I have been asked to describe the conditions under which it will be begun. It will be begun, and continued, I hope, within the terms under which the Board of business men has been set up. I invite the attention of honorable members to those terms. As for the *personnel* of the Board, which is to control all future operations at the Dockyard, the chairman will be Mr. Farquhar, formerly of Walkers Limited, Queensland. His colleagues will be Mr. Aird, of Melbourne, and Mr. Brown, late of the Prime Minister's Department.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—Do the Government propose to give this House an opportunity to discuss the report of the Commission?

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—I have received only an interim report.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—I refer to the final report.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—Yes.

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND**.—There are also some features in connexion with the appointment and powers of the Board which Parliament should have an opportunity to discuss before that phase of the matter is completed.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—To that comment also my remark is, "Yes." All that the interim report recommends is the completion of the two boats at Cockatoo; and, with respect to the conclusion of those jobs, there can be no controversy. The vessels should be finished at the earliest possible moment.

#### LORD HOWE AND NORFOLK ISLANDS AND NEW HEBRIDES MAIL CONTRACT.

**Mr. WEST**.—I call the attention of Acting Prime Minister to the fact that the mail contract in connexion with the Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands and New Hebrides must be renewed in July. Since there is no one in this House but myself who has any idea of the terms of that contract and of what is generally involved, I ask whether, before anything is done in the matter of renewing the contract, I shall be given an opportunity of discussing the whole subject. The



subsidy amounts to something like £12,000 for the conveyance of mails to and from the three island groups.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I invite the honorable member to put his question on the business-paper, and to address it to the Postmaster-General.

Mr. WEST.—I have already done so, and have got the usual Ministerial reply, which nobody can understand.

### TARIFF.

#### MANUFACTURE OF CARDIGAN JACKETS.

Mr. GREGORY.—In the course of the opening debate upon the Tariff the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) made certain statements in which he referred to the inability of Free Trade England to supply cardigan jackets to the troops. Later, I read a statement which was ridiculed by some honorable members. I have now a copy of a letter from the War Office, and, if I am permitted to read it, I will ask the Minister a question thereon.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter).—The honorable member is evidently dealing with something that arose in the Committee of Ways and Means, and I think he had better defer the matter until the Committee resumes.

Mr. GREGORY.—Very well. I wish now to hand to the Minister for Trade and Customs a copy of a letter and statement of receipts and issues by the War Office, and to ask him if he will give these papers consideration, and either confirm or withdraw the statement which he previously made in connexion with this matter.

Mr. GREENE.—Yes, I will.

### REPATRIATION.

#### UPPER BURNETT LANDS — SOLDIER SETTLEMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

Mr. CORSER.—I ask the Assistant Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Rodgers), whether he will kindly give the House and the country the benefit of the opinion he has formed of the Upper Burnett country in Queensland from a closer settlement point of view, as the result of his recent visit of inspection.

Mr. RODGERS.—I have recently had an opportunity of visiting the vast stretch of rich and fertile country referred to in company with the honorable member

for Wide Bay (Mr. Corser), and General Sir Thomas William Glasgow. I should like time to give a considered opinion on the Upper Burnett area, which, unquestionably, has few equals in the Commonwealth for extent and fertility of soil, and readiness for settlement. Its settlement by returned soldiers is a proposition well worthy of consideration. I defer any further comment upon it.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Is the Assistant Minister for Repatriation aware that for two or three years quite a number of people have been waiting for payment for lands purchased for returned soldiers in New South Wales, and that they have been repeatedly told by the Under-Secretary for Lands in New South Wales that they cannot be paid or the purchases be finalized until money is provided for the purpose? Is the honorable gentleman aware that in a number of these cases great inconvenience and loss has been caused, and will he state what steps he proposes to take to finalize them?

Mr. RODGERS.—I regret to say that complaints of the nature referred to by the honorable gentleman have reached the Department of Repatriation. I cannot personally accept responsibility for the condition of affairs of which the honorable member complains, nor can the Commonwealth Government. I stated yesterday, and now repeat, that the Commonwealth Government made provision for, and this Parliament approved of, an allocation of £4,000,000 for soldier land settlement in New South Wales. The Treasurer has since supplemented that amount by a further grant of £250,000.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The Government gave Victoria £1,000,000 more than it gave New South Wales last year.

Mr. RODGERS.—Speaking from memory, I do not think that there is one fully certified account for land settlement in New South Wales that has not been met by the Commonwealth Government.

### INCOME TAX.

Mr. FLEMING asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Has his attention been directed to the statement made by a professor of the West Australian University, as follows:—"In a mathematical examination paper only three out of



seventy-six University students tackled the problem of computing the Federal tax on an income. All three were incorrect." What steps, if any, are being taken to simplify the forms of taxation used by the Commonwealth?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It is said that in considering a problem the first thing to do is to define terms. How are we to interpret the statement of this West Australian professor? Is it a reflection on the teaching of mathematics in Western Australia?

Mr. FLEMING.—I guess it is a reflection on Mr. Knibbs' curves.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—My answer must be that my attention has not previously been drawn to the statement referred to. I have, however, now seen the statement which was made to the Royal Commission on Taxation. One of the matters referred to the Commission was to inquire into and report upon "The simplification of the duties of taxpayers in relation to returns and in relation to objections and appeals." The report of the Commission has not yet been received by the Government, but I hope that this is one of the matters which we shall soon be able to clear up.

#### LONDON CONFERENCE OF AGRICULTURISTS.

Mr. FLEMING asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Is it the intention of the Government that Australia should be represented at the Empire Conference of Agriculturists to be held in London on 14th and 15th July next?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I have no information whatever on this matter.

#### TARIFF.

*In Committee of Ways and Means:*

Consideration resumed from 9th June (*vide* page 8970):

##### DIVISION V.—METALS AND MACHINERY.

\*Motive power, engine combinations, and power connexions are dutiable under their respective headings when not integral parts of machines, machinery, or machine tools.

##### Item 158—

Wire netting, per ton, British, 68s.; intermediate, 85s.; general, 105s.

Upon which Mr. GREGORY had moved by way of amendment—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 11th June, 1921, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 10 per cent.; general, 10 per cent."

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [11.28].—I should like to be permitted to amend my amendment. I wish to make it operative as from the 31st July, 1921. Wire netting is essential for the settlement of new land, and I think that it should be admitted free. In my view, the industry established here should be protected by a bounty. If the amendment in the form in which I now wish to submit it is agreed to, the Government will be given ample time—a couple of months—in which to introduce legislation in connexion with Tariff reform, and make provision for a bounty for the wire-netting industry. I think that until the 31st of July the duty proposed in this Tariff should remain in force, and that after that date wire netting should be free under the British preferential Tariff, and there might be a small duty against continental or other wire netting. The demand by members of all parties is for greater production, and that can only be brought about by a better use of lands already occupied, or the opening up of new lands. In the opening up of new areas, particularly in remote districts, wire netting is an absolute necessity for the protection of sheep from dingoes and the protection of crops and cereals from rabbits. No one would consider for a moment the opening up of a new sheep station in any of the remote districts of Australia without making provision for wire netting. I remember that, nine or ten years ago, with another, I was opening up some 6,000 acres of land, and we had to put rabbit-proof fencing around the whole area. The cost was then from £57 to £58 per mile, including posts and ordinary barbed wire, as well as wire netting. We need not worry much about the barbed wire, although it forms an essential part of fencing against vermin, because the cost is small in comparison with the cost of wire netting. A vermin-proof fence at the time I refer to cost anything from £57 to £60 per mile. It is idle for honorable members to talk about dumping when the price of wire netting to-day is more than 200 per cent. higher than its pre-war price. This article must be used extensively if we are to develop the resources of Australia, and yet the Government ask that a duty shall be imposed upon it. I admit that if they will not grant a bonus to encourage its production, there is no justification, in view of the duties which have been imposed



upon iron, steel, and wire, in leaving it without some measure of Protection. To do so would be grossly unfair to those who are engaged in its manufacture, and who will be compelled to pay duties upon the iron and steel which they use in their operations. But if the conditions obtained to-day, under which the iron and steel industry was established in Australia, there would be no excuse for protecting wire netting. We have in power at the present time a Government whose members pretend that they are desirous of fostering production in this country, and yet they bring forward a proposal to levy a heavy duty upon this very necessary commodity.

Mr. GREENE.—Does the honorable member know that, based upon present prices, the duty proposed in this schedule is less than that which was imposed under the old Tariff? The duty upon wire netting to-day is less than the duty which was collected for some years.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member for Dampier has bad luck with his statements.

Mr. GREGORY.—I have nothing of the sort. The statements which have been prepared for me are just as complete as any which come from the Department of Trade and Customs.

Mr. GREENE.—What was the old duty?

Mr. GREGORY.—The old duty was, British, free; general, 10 per cent.; but I am under the impression that at a later stage it was increased to 15 under the British preferential Tariff and 20 per cent. under the general Tariff. I know that the duty collected upon wire netting in 1913 amounted to only £123, while with the same importation to-day the duty would be £75,424.

Mr. GIBSON.—From the stand-point of the value of wire netting to-day, how does the duty now proposed compare with the duty which was levied prior to the war?

Mr. GREENE.—I have said that, based upon present prices, the duty now proposed is less than was the old duty.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister said that later. His first statement was that the duty was lower.

Mr. GREENE.—No. The honorable member should point out that the present duty is lower than was the old duty.

Mr. GREGORY.—Per mile of netting?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes.

Mr. GREGORY.—Certainly not. I do not intend to institute a comparison between a free and a 10 per cent. duty, when wire netting cost £50 per mile, as it did in 1913, and the duty which is now proposed, when that article is costing £100 to £150 per mile. I regard the importation of wire netting as of very great importance to our agricultural and pastoral production. The Government have recently incurred an enormous expenditure in sending agents to England for the purpose of attracting desirable immigrants to Australia, and an intense anxiety has been exhibited to secure English reservists, with a view to pushing forward the development of our back country. But surely we cannot dump these reservists in the bush, and tell them that upon every article which they require they must pay a high Tariff taxation. If the Government had the slightest desire to aid in the settlement of our rural areas, they would remit the duty proposed upon wire netting, and stimulate the manufacture of that article by the payment of a bounty.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Should we then be able to purchase wire netting any cheaper than we shall be able to purchase it under the Government proposal?

Mr. GREGORY.—By that means we should be building up the industry. The honorable member for Hume (Mr. Parker Moloney) has argued more than once that no matter what taxation is imposed upon any commodity, its effect is to decrease the price of it. Let us test that theory. There are quite a number of orchardists in his own electorate, many of whom are obliged to cover the whole of their orchards with wire netting.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Those orchardists ought not to be at the mercy of a foreign combine.

Mr. GREGORY.—Honorable members are well aware of the enormous losses which have been sustained by the man upon the land on account of the rabbit pest, and of the huge sums which have been expended upon wire netting in an endeavour to cope with that pest. We also know that it has been used extensively in some parts of the country by



pastoralists who desired to protect their flocks from the ravages of the dingo.

Mr. FRANCIS.—Is wire-netting not now obtainable?

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes; but only at enormously high prices. Prices have been 400 per cent. over those ruling before the war, and on many occasions wire-netting has been unobtainable.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I think that the honorable member's move is really to prevent an increased duty being proposed, and that he is not actually out to secure a reduction.

Mr. GREGORY.—Not at all. I desire to secure free netting, and make the people of Australia pay by means of a bounty. The Government, realizing the great value of wire-netting in connexion with the development of Australia, allowed imports from the United Kingdom to come in free. I do not know that local manufacturers have asked for any duty provided that their raw material is allowed to come in free. The Minister is so imbued with the idea that high Protective duties are of marvellous value to the community that I do not expect to get any concession from him.

Mr. CORSER.—That is a very unfair observation.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am speaking as the result of my experience of what has been done so far in connexion with the Tariff. The honorable member (Mr. Corser) was, no doubt, placated by the increased duty placed on bananas. The increase was so enormous that it astonished honorable members.

Mr. CORSER.—I did not move that increase.

Mr. GREGORY.—I hope, at all events, that the Minister will give serious consideration to the demand for some concession in connexion with this important item. I desire, by leave, to amend my amendment by substituting "31st July," for "10th June".

Amendment, by leave, amended accordingly.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [11.45].—I hope that honorable members will give very earnest consideration to the item under review. I do not know whether the Committee would approve of the application of the bounty system

to the manufacture of wire-netting; but I certainly cannot support the duties set out in the schedule. I am aware that a new industry for the manufacture of wire-netting has been commenced in Australia; but, while the Committee has been more than generous in its efforts to protect new industries, this impost comes into direct conflict with primary production in Australia to an extent that should convince even those who favour a highly Protective Tariff that relief must be given, either by means of a bounty on the local manufacture of wire-netting, or by returning to free imports from Great Britain, placing a duty of only 5 per cent. on imports from other countries.

Mr. GIBSON.—The Minister has said that the rates under the old Tariff were higher. We will accept the old Tariff.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Yes. I want to tell the Committee the exact position in regard to the manufacture we are now discussing. The rabbit and the dingo are the greatest enemies of the primary producer in Australia. That remark applies equally to the farmers within the Hundreds, and to the pastoralists outside. The State of which I am a representative has had a rather severe experience in this direction, and other State Governments are beginning to admit that they will have to incur enormous expenditure, as South Australia has done for the last thirty years, in order to contend with the ravages of the dingo outside, as well as the rabbits inside, the Hundreds. The duty on barbed wire also has an important bearing on this question. In the outside vermin districts, where dog-proof fences have to be erected, barbed wire is a very considerable item. Not only two widths of the netting, but at least three spans of the barbed wire are used in order to make the fences thoroughly effective. I do not propose to go into details; but I may say that, in order to rescue the outside pastoral areas of South Australia from the ravages of the dingo and the de-population which that pest brought about between twenty and thirty years ago, so large an expenditure had to be incurred on vermin-proof fencing that the vermin-fencing rates were actually greater than the rents for the pastoral areas. The Government had to spread the repayments over a period of



twenty-one years, and in many instances even that period had to be extended in order to prevent the country from being once more deserted. The Minister says that, per mile, the impost is not so great as it was prior to the war.

Mr. GREENE.—I did not say that.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER. — The Minister spoke to that effect.

Mr. GREENE.—No.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Then I shall be glad to hear what the Minister did say, and what he means.

Mr. GREENE.—What I said was that the application of the *ad valorem* duty at present means a greater impost, at the moment, than the particular duty for which I am asking.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—“At the moment”? Well, I wish to tell the Minister that the dingoes have had free play during the war period, where vermin-infested districts had not already been provided with fences.

Mr. GREENE.—That is the trouble.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The reason for this non-provision of fences was the fabulous price that was charged—a price that the country could not pay. Wire netting during the war was 400 per cent. higher in price than prior to the war.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—What was the cause of that?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Largely the cause was that the machinery employed in this business was being used for war purposes. For instance, barbed wire was required for the war; and many of us were hoping that, when the war was over, and valuable material was being disposed of, we might get it at cheap rates. That, however, has not occurred, and is not likely to occur.

Mr. GREENE.—Do you know why?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It would be very difficult to say; there are several reasons.

Mr. GREENE.—It was not any good—that was the trouble.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER. — The Minister is quite right; the material was of such inferior quality that if it had been brought here it would have proved practically useless.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Does the honorable member know that the barbed wire manufactured here is cheaper than that imported?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That may be; but it is still nearly 300 per cent. higher in price than before the war.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Still, it is cheaper than the imported article.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Producing interests in Australia, particularly in the interior, cannot pay either 300 per cent., 200 per cent., or 100 per cent. on the previous prices. We hope to get back to former conditions, and, until we do, we must not simply sit down and allow the dingoes to ravage the outlying country. This item affects the wool industry, which is the biggest in Australia. Are we going to hamper that great industry, and production all over the interior of Australia, simply because a manufacturer has started to turn out barbed wire here? If we are going to stand by this manufacturer, I see no other course open to us than that suggested by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory); namely, to give a bounty instead of imposing a duty. At any rate, something must be done by the Government, in their own interests, as well as in the national interests. Squatters who were doing fairly well at one time are being ruined, and no revenue is obtained from them, either through the Customs or by way of income tax, while the wool industry, which is the largest in Australia, and as a wool industry the largest in the world, is jeopardized.

These remarks apply equally to the wheat industry. We cannot get rid of the rabbits, except on little garden crops, by which I mean small farms of 200 or 300 acres. Farming is conducted in Australia on large areas, and it is practically impossible to do without wire netting. I know that shire councils have passed by-laws and made provision for simultaneous destruction, but that has never proved effective. The only effective means is to give the individual farmer wire netting at a price which will enable him to encircle his own property. I am reminded that there are large areas of Government lands which are open, and form breeding grounds for pests; this, to my sorrow, I know to be a



fact. Every State Government of Australia is equally wicked in this relation, and it is the State Governments who ought to be made responsible.

Mr. GREENE.—They never take the responsibility.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—And they never will; it is hopeless to expect it. The position, during the war, was simply one of helplessness, and it is nearly so now, because, as I have said, the price is nearly 300 per cent. higher than before the war. I urge the Government to look at the matter from a national point of view. Honorable members should see that this proposed impost cannot be to the national interest, if it is simply for the purpose of building up one manufacture while many millions of acres are laid waste.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That statement would appeal to anybody if it were true, but what caused the 300 per cent. rise in the price of wire netting—was it the Tariff?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am glad the honorable member has raised that point, for it is one with which I propose to deal. We are told by some honorable members that the establishment of this industry in Australia, even if only by the creation of one big company, will give us a cheaper article. Let me tell the Committee that, in pre-war days, if there was profiteering amongst importers, there was none in regard to this particular article.

Mr. MATHEWS.—They must have been angels from heaven.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—No; I shall tell the honorable member the reason. The Governments of the various States, following the lead of South Australia, given nearly thirty years ago, viewed this as a national question. The great object was to stimulate and increase production, and it was arranged to supply farmers and graziers at prime cost. The Lands Department of South Australia imported wire netting, as also did Elder, Smith, and Company and other big firms, and every farmer and pastoralist was supplied with it at, as nearly as possible, prime cost; in no instance were they called upon to pay more than 5 per cent. Without such an arrangement, what would have been the position of the wool and wheat industries

in the districts chiefly concerned? I ask the Government to take the matter into speedy consideration; and I say definitely that I shall not vote for this impost unless relief is given in some other direction.

Mr. BELL (Darwin) [11.59].—I do not know whether it would be practicable to offer a bounty in order to encourage this industry, but I believe that the proposal of the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has the sympathy of the majority of members. To come straight to the point—we require cheap wire netting. If it is necessary to protect this industry to the extent that the Minister considers essential, the only alternative to the high duty proposed is a bounty. I want the Committee to realize the seriousness of the vermin trouble in many parts of Australia. I am not familiar with the portions of the Commonwealth where the dingo pest prevails, but I know the serious state of affairs that the small farmer and settler is up against with regard to rabbits. The honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) last night, in reply to something I said, wanted to know why settlers who had been on the land for thirty years did not fence their holdings while wire netting was cheap. The honorable member is evidently not familiar with the position that prevailed in Gippsland, a district that I knew a good deal about some fifteen or twenty years ago. We had no rabbits there until about twenty years back. Eventually a few appeared, but the settlers would not believe that they were ever likely to be a serious menace, although they knew that rabbits were eating out the graziers in other parts of the Commonwealth. Until about ten years ago the rabbits had not increased to such an extent as to be a menace to the holders of land in Gippsland, but to-day there are districts where numerous settlers, after clearing their land of virgin forest and making it productive, are being compelled to abandon it to the rabbits. This applies particularly to areas of cleared land surrounded by second and third class country, some of it worthless and overgrown with rubbish, and offering a harbor for the vermin. It is absolutely impossible for the settlers to make their own land productive unless they can fence it securely. About that time wire netting began to increase in price, and about six or seven years ago the price was almost prohibitive. I am not going to argue as



to what the cause of this was. The question that confronts us to-day is, How are we to get the necessary wire netting at a lower price? Will the system of giving a bounty to encourage the industry meet the case? The position in Tasmania to-day is very similar to what it was in Gippsland fifteen years ago. The rabbit is now making inroads on the settlers' holdings, and in a few years' time I can see a state of affairs arising there exactly parallel with what it is in many portions of Australia, and the settlers having to walk out ruined. Can we afford to see a vast area of some of the finest land in the Commonwealth become absolutely unproductive?

Mr. FENTON.—That is a pretty black picture.

Mr. BELL.—It is. One honorable member last night accused honorable members on this side of crying. I shed a few tears after listening to him because of the absolute want of knowledge he displayed of the conditions prevailing in the agricultural and grazing industries.

Mr. STEWART.—If they were put on some of that land they would talk pretty eloquently after a few years.

Mr. BELL.—I am afraid that many honorable members, especially those who come from the cities, continually focus their attention on the wealthy farmers and graziers, forgetting that the overwhelming majority of those on the land, both in agriculture and grazing, are strugglers. They have been strugglers even during the last five or six years, and it is their interests that I am trying to look after. There are too few members in the House familiar with the circumstances and struggles of these people. I am sure that if other honorable members had the same knowledge of their circumstances that some of us have, they would extend their fullest sympathy to these struggling people. I want the Committee to look at this case in the light of the absolute necessity of providing cheap wire netting in order to save large areas of the finest land from the ravages of vermin. As to what the Minister said about the duty to-day being less than previously, it must be clear to the Minister and others, after consideration, that the wire netting industry to-day is getting more protection than it did under the 1914 Tariff. That is the point, and there is nothing else to consider. Whether or not that protection is necessary for the industry,

obviously the price of wire netting will increase in proportion to the increased protection that we grant. We have heard from high Protectionists and Prohibitionists frequently that to give more protection to an industry does not increase the price. I have not yet been able to satisfy myself that that is the case. On the other hand we have heard, during the debate on this division, and particularly on pig iron, that, unless a high duty was imposed, certain industries would run a serious risk of being wiped out, and that the working people engaged in them would have their wages reduced. How can that come about unless the greater protection is going to increase the price of the commodity? We want cheap wire netting, and I urge the Minister to consider seriously whether it is not possible to adopt a bounty, as suggested by the honorable member for Dampier, in preference to the high protection which the Minister wishes to extend. If the Minister has any other scheme to propose that will be acceptable to the Committee I shall be delighted to hear it, but it is absolutely imperative, if we are to save many struggling settlers, and if our land is to continue productive, that we should have cheap wire netting. If we can bring that about without doing any injustice to the people engaged in the wire-netting industry, I hope that means will be taken, so that the settlers for whom I am pleading may be given a measure of relief.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN (Eden-Monaro) [12.9].—I urge the Minister to give further consideration to the arguments of the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). I am not in accord with the honorable member as a rule, but it seems to me that in this matter he has a very good case. The Minister has said that the duty to-day is lower than it was.

Mr. WATKINS.—You need not be frightened. They are making wire netting in Australia to-day cheaper, I believe, than it can be imported.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is the trouble. It is contended with good reason that, although they are making it cheaper in Australia to-day, they are not selling it cheaper. That is the experience of my constituents who, I suppose, are typical of many others. If some



of them are big holders and "squatters," that is not a crime. Years ago many of those big holders were struggling selectors, and they have worked their way up from the shearing sheds and the agricultural fields. These are the men who pioneered this country. Surely it is no crime for some of them to be wealthy to-day, but, as a matter of fact, the rabbit pest has brought a number of them back to scratch. There can never be a golden rule in fiscal matters, applying the same degree of protection to all things; and this particular article, I contend, is an exception. The industry does not require a big plant, because wire netting is being manufactured in many of our gaols. The admission that the effect of the duty would be to increase the cost of the material should be sufficient for us to cry halt, because wire netting is as essential for the orchardist and the grower of other primary products as for the farmer and grazier. The rabbits have become so plentiful in recent years that in some quarters, unfortunately, they have come to be regarded as an industry instead of a pest. Freezing works and other large establishments have been erected throughout the Commonwealth, and the business of rabbiting gives employment to a large number of people at high wages, but it is not an industry that we should encourage in any way. We ought never to lose sight of the fact that the rabbit is the greatest curse that Australia has ever experienced. The Minister should tackle this problem seriously and see whether, by means of a bounty, it is not possible to encourage the manufacture of wire netting in Australia, more especially as it is not likely that the bounty would be collected by two or three big companies or firms. That has been the objection to bounties hitherto, but the manufacture of wire netting might be undertaken in quite a number of country centres, because, as I have already shown, an extensive plant is not required. Unless something is done to make it possible for the producer to get cheap wire netting there is very grave danger, as the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) has pointed out, of many of the richest districts in Australia becoming depopulated. I appeal to the Minister to give serious consideration to the proposal

*Mr. Austin Chapman.*

made by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). This is not a party question.

Mr. WATKINS.—The debate last week on another item was made a party question.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is no reason why this should be, and I hope the honorable member for Newcastle will not regard it as such. I am always glad to know that good wages are paid in any industry. The go-slow policy is the curse. I believe that the higher the wages, provided the men earn them, the better it will be for Australia. We should do everything possible in this matter for the man on the land, because, unless we have a prosperous and contented yeomanry, the industries of our cities must suffer, and eventually we shall find the grass growing on many of our city streets. The argument of the honorable member for Dampier is an appeal to common sense. We should, by means of a bounty, help the small manufacturers to engage in the manufacture of wire netting, so that the struggling settlers, especially those in the isolated districts of the Commonwealth, may be encouraged to check the inroads of the rabbits. Taxation is increasing every year, and these people are up against difficulties at every turn. If we impose the duty provided in the item, we shall only be adding to their troubles. Quite recently, a member of the Ministry paid £90 per mile for wire netting for fencing purposes; how on earth is it possible, then, for our struggling settlers to buy wire-netting in order to keep the vermin off their land, especially when, in some cases, they are alongside Government reserves that are unfenced, and are nothing more than breeding grounds for the rabbits?

Mr. WATKINS.—Then, why not appeal to the State Governments? Why ruin the wire-netting industry?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—I am tired of all this talk about appealing to State Governments, because, after all, the taxpayers of the Commonwealth have to bear the burden, and I think the State Governments are just as anxious as any one else to prevent the increase of the rabbit pest. I again appeal to the Minister to consider



the request made by the honorable member for Dampier. Surely, if three or four experienced men got together and inquired into this matter, they could evolve some proposal which this House could accept, because we are all aiming at the one goal, namely, to promote the industry and at the same time cheapen wire-netting for the man on the land. Personally, I favour a bounty.

**Mr. WATKINS** (Newcastle) [12.17].—If I thought that, by voting for this duty, I should in any way be imposing an additional burden on the farmers of the Commonwealth, I would readily agree to the proposal made by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). But all the arguments that have been used to-day may be applied to every vote that has been taken upon those Tariff items which deal with articles required by our producers.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS**.—So they may.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—I can understand the honorable member for Franklin agreeing with my statement, because he believes in a Free Trade policy.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS**.—I do not believe in sacrificing one class of the community to benefit another.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—Well, that is the position of the Free Trader. I cannot understand the attitude of those honorable members who were returned at the last election on a definite pledge to protect the industries of the Commonwealth and foster new industries.

**Mr. STEWART**.—Including our primary industries.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—Wire-netting manufactured in Australia will, I presume, be just as effective in checking the rabbit pest as the imported article.

**Mr. STEWART**.—Nobody disputes that.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—I believe the manufacturer produces a good article, and that he was quite prepared to carry on without any duty, provided he could get his iron free.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—Of course. We frequently meet that class of manufacturer. Many years ago, in Sydney, they wanted to get black wire free from Germany and galvanize it here. Does the honorable member for Dampier stand for that?

**Mr. GREGORY**.—We always had a duty on the Continental wire, and you know it.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—I am not very much concerned about the Continental wire. I would always prefer the British wire if we could be sure that it really was British, and not wire imported from Continental countries through Great Britain. The prices of many articles have increased enormously, and the men on the land have been affected, because it has been impossible to get supplies of many things from overseas, but the position to-day is quite different. There is in existence in Sydney one big firm which is producing considerable quantities of wire netting. We have been told by another honorable member that that article is being produced elsewhere in the Commonwealth, and we know that one establishment has been started which will be able to supply more than Australia's total requirement of wire netting. That being so, what have the farmers to fear?

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—They are paying 300 per cent. more than they paid before the war.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—Wipe out the local industries, and then what will they pay?

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—For many years before the war we never paid more than 5 per cent. profit on imports.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—We are trying to establish Australian industries that will furnish the farmer with adequate supplies.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS**.—At what price?

**Mr. WATKINS**.—The cost of production plus an ordinary profit.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—If the present prices are to be continued, these establishments might as well be shut up.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—The honorable member would like to revert to pre-war conditions, and reduce the wages in this industry.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—If things continue as they are there will be no sheep and no wages at all on the stations.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—I ask honorable members opposite what sections of the community were best looked after during the war. Were they not the producers of wheat and wool?

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—We are afraid of the rabbit and the dingo.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS**.—During the war the consumer in Australia got wool and wheat cheaper than the consumers anywhere else in the world.



**Mr. WATKINS.**—That is beside the question. If the Government had not come to the aid of those industries, what price would the producer have received for his products? I did not object to what the Government did in time of trouble. We desire to see the people on the land prosper, and we do not wish to set the land-owner against the people in the cities, but that is what is being done. We must all realize that city and country are dependent on each other.

**Mr. STEWART.**—We recognise that, but the city does not.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—When the farmers were in trouble with their wheat and wool the Government came to their rescue. When there have been droughts, have not the State Governments helped the farmers with free seed-wheat and the cheap carriage of their stock over the railways?

**Mr. STEWART.**—Free seed-wheat is unknown to the farmers of Victoria.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—The honorable member is speaking of only one State. The farmers have never been neglected in their time of trouble.

**Mr. BELL.**—I know some who are in trouble always, and have never had assistance.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—That applies generally to the community; there is always some section in trouble. Compare what has been willingly done by Federal and State Governments to help the people on the land, with the treatment meted out to men who invest their money in mines. If a disaster happens in a mine, the owners are liable to be put on trial. If their mine is ruined, they get no help from the Government.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS.**—The coal mine owner has done all right.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—And, according to the returns, so have many of the pastoralists.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS.**—I do not believe in imposing a duty on the miners' shovels and explosives.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—The honorable member is consistent in his attitude.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.**—The honorable member should advocate bounties instead of duties.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—I have never been in favour of bounties except when we could get nothing else, and even then only at the inception of an industry. The farmers have nothing to fear in regard to

wire netting. The Australian production within the next few months will be greater than local requirements. There is far too much decrying of the locally-made article.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—We are not doing that.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—Particularly not in regard to onions. I stated last night some of the many unfair things that are done to interfere with the progress of Australian industries. I mentioned the higher tests to which engineers subject Australian metals in comparison with those imported from abroad.

**Mr. STEWART.**—Every honorable member in this corner disapproves of that test.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—To disapprove of it is one thing, but to take action to benefit the foreign tenderer is another.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS.**—It may mean paying two or three times as much when the article is purchased here.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—Australians should patronize their own industries. Firms are already manufacturing wire netting, and the consumers are not paying as much as they would be compelled to do if our industries were wiped out and those consumers were depending on overseas supplies. I hope the Minister will not agree to any reduction in the duties, so that our industries may be adequately protected. One plant now being established will produce more wire netting than we have ever used in Australia, and will manufacture the wire netting, not from imported material, but from iron ore raised in Australia.

**Mr. ROBERT COOK** (Indi). [12.31].—I have listened with considerable interest to the debate, and I trust the amendment will be agreed to. I feel that the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) is honestly endeavouring to do what is right, and I also believe that the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) is quite in earnest. I am a protectionist, but I desire to afford protection to all classes in the community. We have heard a great deal of the importance of the wire netting industry; but very little has been said concerning the pastoral and farming industries. Are we to sacrifice the greater for the benefit of the lesser? The arguments adduced up to the present appear to be in favour of supporting those industries that are of the greatest consequence to the Commonwealth, and I trust the vote will be recorded in that



way. There has been a good deal of repetition, and it is not my desire to discuss points that have already been mentioned, but I wish to submit a few figures of interest. During the years 1880 to 1919 Victoria has spent £1,082,458 on the eradication of pests. The losses in stock during that period amounted to approximately £6,000,000, whilst those on crops amounted to £4,000,000. Private expenditure in the matter of fencing amounted to £3,000,000, or a total of £14,082,458. The New South Wales Government expended from 1890—I could not obtain the figures before that year—to 1919, £69,800 in fencing, and private individuals spent, in erecting division fences, £6,166,466. The direct losses in stock from 1880 to 1919 were approximately £20,000,000, whilst the losses on crops were £7,000,000, or a total of £33,236,266. The grand total for New South Wales and Victoria is therefore £47,318,724. Private expenditure in New South Wales on fumigating plants, digging out, &c., has amounted to £15,000,000. I have not the figures for South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, or Tasmania, but I understand that thousands of miles of wire netting are required for adequately protecting the orchards in the last-mentioned State. We can safely estimate that the expenditure in the States for which I have not the details would amount to another £15,000,000, on the basis of the figures I have quoted. I have been very conservative in my estimate; and during the past few months I have been to considerable trouble in obtaining the information. The Victorian Government are at present considering a Bill to provide for the eradication of pests, and recommendations have been made to the effect that we should submit to an increase of 5 per cent. in the Land Tax in order to provide money for destroying vermin. In the magnificent Gippsland district, which for some years has not been affected, rabbits are now becoming numerous, and are threatening to be a menace to settlers. We have settled 22,000 returned soldiers on the land, and after many years of bitter experience, I believe, their chief means of protecting their holdings from vermin will be by means of wire netting. Frequent reference has been made to the

importance of the wire netting industry; but what has wheat and wool alone meant to Australia during the recent war? The value of these two commodities alone has been £400,000,000, which would be sufficient to discharge Australia's war obligations. Notwithstanding the importance of these industries to Australia, they have not been given the consideration to which they are entitled. The wire netting industry is not at present in a position to supply our immediate demands, and until it is we should not give it a monopoly and allow it to bleed the consumers in our community. In 1908, 7,604,453 pairs of rabbits, valued at £336,093, were shipped abroad; and in 1917-18, 13,154,307 pairs valued at £985,109, were exported. I estimate that eight rabbits are equal to one sheep; so that the 26,308,614 rabbits exported in 1917-18 were equal to 3,288,579 sheep. If those sheep were valued at 10s. per head, which is a conservative estimate, because many of them were worth 30s., their total value would be £1,644,289, whereas the value of the rabbits was only £985,109. Thus we have a loss in one year—1917-18—of £659,099. Then, in 1908, 65,391 cwt. of rabbit skins were exported. These skins had a value of £304,999. Allowing eight skins to a pound, and assuming that eight rabbits are the equivalent of one sheep, had we been exporting sheep instead of rabbits, the exportation would have been worth £3,500,000. Thus there was a loss of £3,195,000 incurred by exporting rabbits instead of sheep. The following table shows the exportation of frozen rabbits and rabbit skins, and their value, from the year 1908 to the year 1917-18:—

Year.	Rabbits—Frozen.		Rabbit Skins.	
	Pairs.	£	cwt.	£
1908 ..	7,604,053	336,093	65,391	304,990
1909 ..	9,181,312	423,679	62,180	347,244
1910 ..	9,652,127	486,592	86,930	566,739
1911 ..	8,362,994	407,034	92,587	498,037
1912 ..	6,494,259	320,887	87,878	576,179
1913 ..	9,366,290	497,568	86,998	620,487
1914-15 ..	10,290,016	531,920	56,437	230,139
1915-16 ..	11,367,538	724,624	51,857	261,868
1916-17 ..	12,674,472	913,142	48,403	433,546
1917-18 ..	13,154,307	985,190	71,991	1,155,824

The Minister, of course, is possessed of these facts, but some honorable members are ignorant of them. Last night



the honorable member for East Sydney (Mr. West) said that when the farmers had got in their wheat they had nothing more to do until the Great Giver produced the golden grain for their harvesting; but the honorable members for Darling (Mr. Blakeley) and Hume (Mr. Parker Moloney), who know the true position of the farmers, have pictured it quite differently. As a practical man, I know that the rabbits are a pest, and that they and the dogs will be a greater pest in future unless Parliament helps the primary producer by letting him get wire netting at a reasonable price.

**Mr. FLEMING** (Robertson) [12.45].—I cannot allow the occasion to pass without again expressing the hope that the Minister will do something to relieve the man on the land, who is struggling against adverse circumstances. I should be loath to injure the trade of Newcastle, but I am opposed to allowing its interest to drain away the life-blood of the country.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—We are concerned, not with building up Newcastle, but with making the Commonwealth self-contained. Wire is made all over Australia.

**Mr. FLEMING**.—Newcastle is apparently destined by nature to be the great manufacturing centre of Australia, and is at present the chief seat of the iron and steel industry. I know New South Wales, from the coast to beyond the Darling, and from the Murray to the Queensland border, and to me it seems that the octopus-like city of Newcastle is draining the life-blood of its country districts. As a boy, I used to see coming along the Barwon 30,000 wethers, four and six-tooth, one mark, which means that on the stations where they were bred there were at least 60,000 lambs in two years. Does any one see flocks like that to-day? You can travel from one end of New South Wales to the other, and will not cross three stations with such magnificent flocks of sheep as used to be seen in my boyhood. Men are being driven off the Western Plains. The flocks that I speak of gave employment to camps of thirty men and fifty horses, and indirectly provided work for scores of trades connected with the pastoral industry, and assisted to maintain the homes of hundreds of shearers. The question now before the Committee is of such importance to the men of the western districts of New South Wales that it as-

tonishes me that the honorable member for Darling (Mr. Blakeley), who is president of the Australian Workers Union, is not here to protest against the imposition of high duties on wire netting, because his people are vitally concerned, and the bread and butter of thousands of working men throughout the Commonwealth is jeopardized. Paterson has written of Clancy, of The Overflow, riding behind his cattle singing, but there is very little of that nowadays. Men like Clancy have mostly disappeared. Will Ogilvie tell how many of those who put up a hard fight to break in new country have gone down. This Committee, by putting high duties on farm requisites, is helping to destroy the homes of the people outback; homes which have been built up with such stress and trouble. What did Henry Lawson prophesy of the men of those great Western areas of New South Wales whom this Committee would now ruin?

There are boys out there by the western creeks, who hurry away from school, To climb the sides of the breezy peaks or dive in the shaded pool, Who'll stick to their guns when the mountains quake to the tread of a mighty war, And fight for Right or a Grand Mistake as men never fought before.

And did they not fight? This Committee would destroy those who have done so much to make Australia great, and merely for the sake of a small concentrated city industry. I appeal to honorable members to take the broader and more generous view, and to desist from trying to tie Australia's grand manhood to the city streets and lanes. I ask them to help to maintain that happy and vigorous people, for the rearing of whom Australia is already noted, of whom the Empire is proud, and of whom the whole world stands, perhaps, in some awe and, certainly, in respect. We know that the men who set the pace in the recent great conflict were those Australians who had been bred in the bush. Men from the cities played the game well, and to the utmost of their ability; but those who really set and forced the pace came from Australia's broad acres, where they had been face to face with nature, and knew the hardships of life through drought, and flood, and fire. To-day we would fatally injure their prospects, in casual fashion, because one or two powerful voices have made themselves heard in the cities, and,



perhaps, because one who should be present in this Chamber to speak for those men, women, and children of the great Western districts—since they are his constituents—is absent. In making that passing reference, I do not impugn the honorable member at whom it is directed. He, no doubt, has some good public reason for being elsewhere. But I spent my young days on the wide Western plains, and I know full well the fight which the settlers there have had to wage against every variety of obstacle, natural and otherwise. Shall we now take away their birthright?

**Mr. WEST** (East Sydney) [12.54].—I intend to use every opportunity to thwart the miserable cry that we are belittling Australia, and that all our actions tend to throttle the man in the bush. The honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook) deluged the Committee with a mass of figures. The effect of his onslaught was similar to that which I nearly always secure when I have to face a hostile crowd at a public meeting. I fill them up with figures, which get them mystified, and distract their attention from myself. The statistics of losses furnished by the honorable member were so startling that one would believe that Australia to-day is all loss and no profit. As for the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Fleming), I pity him, because he is one of those unfortunates who has "chopped over" from one party to another. He knows, as I know, that the National Caucus is now doing its best to poison his electorate. He has made his pathetic speech to-day with that fact in mind; and, no doubt, since he knows the game, he will have copies of his beautiful thoughts, as recorded in *Hansard*, printed off, and forwarded in pamphlet form to every one of his electors and all the newspapers, if any, in his electorate. Although I live in the city, I am not without friends in the country. I actually have friends in the electorate of Cowper, who, although they are good Labour people, made the best choice possible, in the absence of a Labour candidate, when they sent Dr. Earle Page into Parliament. More than one of these poor miserable struggling farmer friends of mine in Cowper has written, asking me to look out for the best brand of motor car

that I could recommend them. One of them, who has been for nine years in the electorate, bought a farm for about £55 to £60 an acre. To-day this poor, miserable country man tells me he has been asked to sell at £115 an acre. What a shocking state of affairs after nine years on the land! I would like to find a way in the city for turning over capital as rapidly as that. Even in an alleged drought season my friend wrote, telling me that he was doing very well, considering. He said, "I can only send down a little bit of butter, but I get an awfully big cheque back." There are honorable members sitting behind the Government, whose life interest is in the land, who could buy out the whole of the members of the Opposition. When any one of them dies the probate duties connected with his estate will swamp all the means of the living members of the Labour party. Poor, miserable country folk! Look how soft and sick they are. The delicate honorable member for Robertson, if a dray-horse were to kick him, would never feel it; whereas, if a hard and wiry city man, who has to spend his life in the salubrious atmosphere of a factory, were to receive that same kick, he would not live to learn what had struck him. Altogether, the man on the land is doing very well. There is no need to cry over him. He has only to "raise a holler," and the Government come to his rescue, whether it be a matter of wool or wheat or onions. Millions are advanced to see him "round the corner." Bank deposits throughout Australia are enormous because the bank is where the wretched, struggling farmer puts his hoardings.

*Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.*

**Mr. McWILLIAMS** (Franklin) [2.15].—I listened with great interest to the speech made by the honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook). Whilst the honorable member, and other honorable members, have dealt with the duty on wire-netting as it affects pastoralists and large land-owners, I want the Committee to bear in mind that, perhaps, the smallest land-holders in Australia—I refer to the holders of orchards of 10 or 15 acres in extent—must have wire-netting if they are to carry on their industry. I do not know of one district in Tasmania in which it would be safe for a man to plant out



young trees in his orchard without first putting a rabbit-proof fence around it. Even when this is done, it is often found necessary to flag the trees to prevent them being ring-barked by hares and rabbits as effectively as if a man went round them and scraped the bark off with a knife. We are placing many hundreds of returned soldiers on orchard properties in Tasmania and in Victoria. We often speak of the value of closer settlement in Australia, and there is no industry which is more useful for closer settlement than is the fruit-growing industry. In my own electorate, there are hundreds of men whose orchards do not exceed 20 acres in extent. It is considered that 25 acres is as much as an ordinary man and his family, with a little outside help occasionally, can attend to. We are being asked to-day to impose a tax on every one of the owners of these small areas to keep one industry going.

Mr. WATKINS.—We deny that. We say that if you wipe out the duty, those who require wire-netting will have to pay more for it.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I admire the fight which the honorable member is putting up from the stand-point of encouraging a particular industry at the expense of those engaged in other industries. I wish to encourage the wire-netting industry; but I utter my protest against encouraging one industry at the expense of men who, in my view, are more deserving of encouragement than are those engaged in the wire-netting industry.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Is the honorable member referring to onions?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I am referring to something which the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best) does not understand, and that is common sense. The honorable member waves the flag in this House, and would die for the flag, but he will not trade with it. It is about time that kind of hypocrisy was put an end to. What does the honorable member think about that and onions? I was not here when the debate upon the duty on onions took place. It would spell ruin to the orchard industry in Victoria and Tasmania if the orchardists did not use wire-netting for the protection of their orchards. Hundreds of miles of it must be used. I have said that we are

putting returned soldiers into the orchard industry, and before the returned soldier can plant his trees, he must protect his orchard with wire-netting. Those engaged in the fruit-growing industry have to labour hard for seven or eight years before they can look for 1s. return from their labour. The amendment moved by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) is exceedingly fair. He says that we require to encourage the wire-netting industry, and are prepared to do so by the payment of a bounty. That bounty would be paid by the whole of the people of Australia for the protection of the wire-netting industry, and not by a particular class or section of the community. This duty is absolutely a class tax imposed on those who use wire-netting. Without wire-netting, the pastoral industry, the agricultural industry for the most part, and practically the whole of the horticultural industry, cannot be carried on. The Minister (Mr. Greene) is asking that orchardists, who have to wait for seven or eight years before they can look for a return from their labour, shall pay tribute to a wealthy company like the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. I am prepared to assist the wire-netting industry, but I am not prepared to allow the Broken Hill Proprietary Company to levy tribute on a class of the community who are unable to bear it. During the last few years, orchardists have had to meet particularly bad times. Every honorable member knows that, in the orchard districts of Victoria, Tasmania, and New South Wales, thousands of tons of fruit have rotted on the ground because there was no market for it.

Mr. WEST.—The fruit would have rotted whether there was a duty on wire-netting or not.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Of course it would; but my point is that men who have laboured under such serious disadvantages, because of high freights and the disorganization of the markets should not be taxed on their only means of salvation. We are being asked to tell those men that they must put wire-netting fences around their properties, and before they can do so they must pay tribute to one of the wealthiest companies in Australia.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [2.25].—The honorable member for Franklin (Mr.



McWilliams) has made a speech typical of all those which have been made during the debate in opposition to this duty. He has talked of the tremendous hardship it will be to the small orchardist if we impose this duty. I take the typical orchard of, say, 30 acres, and I ask the honorable member what is the distance around it in chains?

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Let the honorable gentleman work it out.

Mr. GREENE.—It is 26 chains, or a little over a quarter of a mile.

Mr. WATT.—Is the honorable gentleman sure of that figure?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes. Ten chains by 1 chain is an acre. There would be two sides of 10 chains and 3 at each end: does that not give 26 chains?

Mr. WATT.—The honorable gentleman has said that 10 chains by 1 chain is the distance round an acre; that is two sides of 11 chains, and that should be multiplied by 30 for an orchard of 30 acres.

Mr. GREENE.—No; but I think that the distance round a 30-acre orchard would be 80 chains, which is 1 mile.

Mr. WATT.—That is a little more than the honorable gentleman said at first.

Mr. GREENE.—That is so. The pre-war price of wire netting was £25 per mile, and this duty represents 12½ per cent. on the pre-war price.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Is the honorable gentleman sure that the pre-war price was £25 per mile? I think that his figures are all wrong.

Mr. GREENE.—I am speaking of wire netting 42 inches deep, 1½-inch mesh, and 17 gauge.

Dr. EARLE PAGE.—And you can get a rebate of 50 per cent. if you take a mile of it.

Mr. GREENE.—I am talking from the trade circulars put into my hands. Take the price as £25 per mile, and I say the duty represents 12½ per cent. on that. Assuming that 1 mile of fencing is required for a typical orchard of 30 acres, that would mean a mere bagatelle per orchard; and yet the honorable member for Franklin talks about this duty as a crushing burden on the man on the land.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I did not say that it was a crushing burden. I said it was a burden that we had no right to place upon him.

Mr. GREENE.—I do not admit for a moment that the imposition of the duty means dearer wire; but supposing that the

whole of the duty were borne by the man on the land, how much would it represent to a man with 30 acres of orchard? It would be a mere bagatelle; and yet that is the sort of argument we have been listening to all the morning.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—What about the wider areas?

Mr. GREENE.—I admit that, in the case of the wider areas, if the whole of the duty is passed on to the land-holder, it may represent a considerable burden. The argument of the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) this morning was that during the war we could not get wire; that the pastoralists were absolutely helpless, as the dingoes were coming in, and that they could do nothing to keep them out.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—And we are helpless now.

Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member said, further, that the price of wire netting went up so high that it was utterly impossible for our land-holders to fence out the pests. That is exactly the reason why I believe we should endeavour to establish the wire netting industry in this country.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We got cost price from the factories at Home before the war, and no firm in Adelaide put more than 5 per cent. on that.

Mr. GREENE.—That does not interfere with my argument that it would be desirable to have this industry established in Australia.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I can tell the honorable gentleman further that the cost of the netting was more than the rent of the land.

Mr. GREENE.—None of these statements affect my argument that our war experience has shown us that this is an industry which, perhaps, above all others, we should endeavour to establish in Australia.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Is the Minister aware that, years and years ago, miles and miles of wire netting were being made in Pentridge?

Mr. GREENE.—The authorities there were importing the actual wire and the inmates of the gaol were simply weaving it. It was because of that policy that we found ourselves in the position of being unable to effectively help ourselves during the war. Instead of having built up this industry from its base, the



blast furnace, we had merely undertaken the work of weaving the netting from imported wire, with the result that we found ourselves in an extremely parlous position during the war, as we could not obtain any wire. The high price which we have been paying for some considerable time for Australian-made wire netting is largely accounted for by the fact that that netting has been made from imported rods. Had we been able to manufacture our own rods and draw our own wire from our own material, using our own spelter, we would have been in a position to supply the farmers and graziers of Australia with wire netting at a reasonable price. The remarks of the honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook) in regard to the immense losses which our people have sustained through their inability to obtain wire netting, are perfectly true. It is because the Government are cognisant of those losses and realize that they are the direct result of the industry not having been established in the right way, that we are now attempting to build it up from the base. The honorable member for Wakefield has complained that we are seeking to impose a duty upon the raw material for this industry. But we are doing that because of the lessons which we have learned as the result of our war experience. It is perfectly true that we have had for some time in Australia looms for the weaving of wire netting. Our difficulty has been that we had not the wire to weave.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Give us the old duty.

Mr. GREENE.—Under the old Tariff wire netting from the United Kingdom was admitted free. Those honorable members who have spoken upon this item have recognised the desirableness of establishing the industry in this country. Even the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), strong as are his leanings towards Free Trade, has said that we ought not to destroy it. He has urged that we should stimulate the production of wire netting by the payment of a bounty. But the policy which we have hitherto adopted has been to give a bounty only in cases in which it was necessary to gradually build up an industry until it was capable of supplying the reasonable requirements of our own people. Where an industry is

in a position to supply the whole of our requirements in any particular line, we have always protected it by means of a duty. What is the position in regard to wire netting? There is one establishment in Sydney, the capacity of which is 1,600 miles per month. Another factory is in course of erection at Newcastle, and part of it is already producing. That establishment has a still greater capacity than have the works in Sydney. There are several other firms which are manufacturing wire netting, but which are not in a position to draw the wire. Because we found ourselves in such an awkward predicament during the war, I believe, the Sydney factory extended its works very considerably. Then, Messrs. Ryland, one of the best English manufacturers, whose product is more favorably known than is that of any other manufacturer in the world, have come here, and have erected a very large factory which, within a short space of time, will be in a position, along with the other factories already established, to supply our whole wire netting requirements. We are not in the hands of a monopolistic institution in respect of this commodity.

Mr. GREGORY.—Would not the British firm mentioned by the Minister have been willing to conduct operations without the aid of a duty, if their raw materials had been admitted free?

Mr. GREENE.—They may have been. But have I not been attempting during the past ten minutes to show that it was because we had admitted iron and steel wire free that we found ourselves in such a hopeless position during the war? Yet the honorable member says that we ought to continue that state of things. I say that it is a suicidal policy to follow.

Mr. GREGORY.—The industry was built up under Free Trade.

Mr. GREENE.—It was not an industry. In effect, the honorable member says that we must not use our own raw material, our own iron ores, or our own blast furnaces, but that we must use the material, ores, and blast furnaces of other countries. He says that we should import the rods and weave the netting from them. That is not my conception of an industry. Here we have an opportunity to make Australia self-contained in regard to one of the commodities which I regard as essential to our welfare. The



honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) suggests that we should revert to the old condition which was responsible for one of Australia's greatest drawbacks during the war period, and one which caused greater losses to our primary producers than did any other factor. I have the interests of the primary producer as dearly at heart as has any honorable member. But I do not believe that it is in the interests of our primary producers that they should be told that we are imposing a crushing burden upon them by means of these duties. I believe that the very opposite is true; and that is why I stand for duties which I conceive to be necessary, not only in the interests of the community as a whole, but in the interests of the primary producers in particular.

Mr. GIBSON.—Is there sufficient wire of the finer gauges being manufactured in Australia to enable the industry to be carried on?

Mr. GREENE.—Undoubtedly. The wire-drawing establishments we have at the present time can supply all our requirements.

Mr. GIBSON.—Has the Minister seen the telegram which was received by the honorable member for Parkes (Mr. Marr)?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes, but that does not affect my argument. I know where that telegram came from, and all that lies behind it. As a matter of fact a similar telegram was sent to me. I do not wish to occupy further time, but I do suggest that we should take a vote upon this item immediately. The Government feel that the duties proposed are not high, but that they are sufficient to permit of the establishment of the industry.

Mr. WATT.—The honorable gentleman has not yet dealt with the bounty question.

Mr. GREENE.—When an industry has been definitely established I do not think that the payment of a bounty is the right way in which to assist it. Of course, a bounty may sometimes be usefully employed to build up an industry in its earlier stages.

Mr. WATT.—But if we impose duties upon this item we shall destroy what has previously been done.

Mr. GREENE.—Of course, no bounty could be granted except for wire netting manufactured from Australian wire rods. One cannot conceive of the payment of a bounty for the manufacture of netting from imported wire. We shall have to leave the duty upon wire at the rates set out in item 136E.

Mr. GIBSON.—Does the amendment submitted by the Minister yesterday for the imposition of a duty upon barbed wire of 25 per cent. under the British preferential Tariff, of 30 per cent. under the intermediate Tariff, and of 35 per cent. under the general Tariff, cover wire of 14 gauge and under?

Mr. GREENE.—I have promised the Committee, and I told the honorable member himself that it was not intended to apply those duties to this particular wire, and that I would take the necessary action to restore that class of wire to the duties which are set out in item 136E.

Mr. GREGORY.—Only in regard to the bigger sizes of wire.

Mr. GREENE.—I thought that I had made it abundantly clear that it was intended to entirely remove from the higher duties the class of wire of which I was speaking at the time, and, if the Committee will permit me to do so, I shall take action to that end at the earliest opportunity. The proposal to grant a bounty for this particular purpose would, if the duties were arranged in the manner suggested by the honorable member, entirely close up the smaller manufacturers of wire netting. They would find it impossible to operate. I gave careful consideration during the luncheon hour to the question as to whether it would be possible to substitute, either in part or in whole, a bounty for this duty, and have come to the conclusion that it is practically impossible to do so.

Mr. GREGORY.—If the Minister would agree to recommit the item later on, our party would promise not to debate the question.

Mr. GREENE.—It is difficult for one honorable member to speak for the whole Committee in that regard. If, on further consideration, the Government desires to do anything to meet the honorable member and those who have associated themselves with him in this request, I will



recommit the item; otherwise it will not be recommitted.

Question—That the amendment (Mr. GREGORY's), as amended, be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	29

Majority	..	..	14
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#### AYES.

Atkinson, L.  
Bell, G. J.  
Cameron, D. C.  
Chapman, Austin  
Cook, Robert  
Corser, E. B. C.  
Foster, Richard  
Fowler, J. M.

Gibson, W. G.  
Gregory, H.  
Livingston, J.  
Page, Dr. Earle  
Stewart, P. G.  
*Tellers:*  
Bowden, E. K.  
Foley, G.

#### NOES.

Anstey, F.  
Bamford, F. W.  
Best, Sir Robert  
Charlton, M.  
Cook, Sir Joseph  
Francis, F. H.  
Gabb, J. M.  
Greene, W. M.  
Groom, L. E.  
Higgs, W. G.  
Lamond, Hector  
Lazzarini, H. P.  
Lister, J. H.  
Mackay, G. H.  
Mahony, W. G.

Maloney, Dr.  
Marks, W. M.  
Marr, C. W. C.  
Mathews, J.  
Moloney, Parker  
Rodgers, A. S.  
Ryrie, Sir Granville  
Smith, Laird  
Watkins, D.  
Watt, W. A.  
West, J. E.  
Wise, G. H.  
*Tellers:*  
Burchell, R. J.  
Story, W. H.

#### PAIRS.

McWilliams, W. J.  
Hill, W. C.  
Prowse, J. H.  
Wienholt, A.

Makin, N. J. O.  
Fenton, J. E.  
Jackson, D. S.  
Blakeley, A.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 159—

Wire n.e.i., also woven wire measuring over 40 holes to the lineal inch, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [2.53].—I promised honorable members that I would take the earliest opportunity to free wire for netting and barbed wire from the higher rate of duty that we put on the finer gauges the other day. With that object in view, I move—

That the item be amended by adding "And on and after 11th June, 1921, (b) Wire, iron and steel, for use in the manufacture of barbed wire and wire netting as prescribed by departmental by-laws, per ton, British, 52s.; intermediate, 72s. 6d.; general, 90s."

On the passing of this amendment, all that we shall have to be satisfied as to is

that the wire is being used solely for these purposes. On that being shown to our satisfaction, the wire will come in at these lower rates under the departmental by-laws.

Amendment agreed to.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [2.55].—I should be glad if the Minister would agree to revert to the wording of the old Tariff, "woven wire, measuring over 20 holes to the lineal inch." The item, as it stands, deals with woven wire measuring over 40 holes to the lineal inch. This is a matter of importance to the mining industry. The amendment I suggest would not interfere with local production. I have been asked by the Chamber of Mines to bring this matter before the Committee, and if the Minister is not prepared to reduce the measurement from 40 holes to 20 holes to the lineal inch, I hope he will at least reduce it to 30 holes.

**Mr. GREENE**.—I will accept an amendment reducing the measurement to 30 holes to the lineal inch.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—Then I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 11th June, 1921, (A) Wire n.e.i., also woven wire measuring over 30 holes to the lineal inch, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent."

**Mr. CHARLTON** (Hunter) [2.56].—I want to know, what will be the effect of this amendment?

**Mr. GREGORY**.—It relates only to battery mesh.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—I think we ought to have an explanation from the Minister, who has so readily consented to this amendment. In the absence of any explanation as to what the effect of the amendment will be, we shall be voting in the dark.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [2.58].—The amendment is intended to apply to woven wire ordinarily used for battery screens. Under the old Tariff the item related to woven wire measuring over 20 holes to the lineal inch instead of 40 holes, as provided for in the schedule as it stands. By substituting "30" for "40" we shall make it possible for those using battery screens in the treatment of ores to obtain their requirements under better conditions. The amendment will not affect any Australian industry.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—Is not this particular class of woven wire made in Australia?



Mr. FOLEY.—No. The class of wire covered by the amendment is of the greatest value in the most remote parts of Australia where mining is carried on. Men working a show with a small battery use wire of this mesh, whereas the big companies, working large reduction plants on a scientific basis, have practically done away with its use.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [3.0].—I am not quite satisfied yet. I wish to know definitely from the Minister whether this particular wire-mesh is made in Australia. I quite understand that it is used for battery purposes, and that there may be anxiety to have the duty reduced, or, if possible, abolished. We ought not to pass these items in such a hurried manner, but should be furnished with reasons for any action taken. The statement that this mesh is not made in Australia may be altogether erroneous, and the Minister ought to let us know why he has agreed to accept the amendment. Of course, if the honorable gentleman can satisfy us that it is not manufactured in Australia, we may agree with the amendment, but we ought to have further information. There was an arrangement made, in which the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) concurred, that certain items should be passed by 4 o'clock to-day; and, though it is now 3 o'clock, we have not finally dealt with the item with which we started this morning.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [3.2].—The position, roughly, is that there is one manufacturer who can manufacture this mesh up to 40 holes to the inch. The finest mesh made by the other manufacturers is 30, and I thought that, as by far the greater amount used is the larger stuff, we might agree to the amendment.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Does the same firm manufacture the larger stuff?

Mr. GREENE.—I think so.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If this mesh is let in free, may it not be used for other purposes, and thus compete with other wires?

Mr. GREENE.—I do not think so; the various gauges are used for specific purposes. So far as I can see, the amendment will make no material difference.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 160 (Agricultural machinery, &c.)

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.5].—It will be agreed that, in dealing with this item, it may be necessary for honorable members to also refer to the succeeding items up to and including item 167, all of which deal with agricultural machinery and implements. I rise now to ask that threshing machines be removed from the item before us to item 163, in order that they may have the advantage of the higher duties. I do not ask that all threshing machines be removed from one item to the other, but only those machines with a 3-foot drum or under. Many years ago threshing machines were largely manufactured in Australia, but the industry was destroyed by importations. It has never yet been proved that increased prices are brought about by the imposition of duties. In Free Trade countries, where there is no local opposition, the highest prices are obtained. It cannot be shown that in Free Trade New Zealand agricultural implements are any cheaper than they are in Australia.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think that can be proved.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The Prime Minister of New Zealand takes a great interest in the agricultural industry, and is fully conversant with the position in the Dominion, and he emphatically says that because of the high prices there for agricultural implements the farming community are brought to a dead stand-still.

Mr. GREGORY.—These implements are dearer here than there.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member may prove that if he is able to. I know that the price of the imported article has increased to an enormously greater extent than has that of the locally manufactured article, quite apart from any effect of the duties imposed. This I shall prove by figures, showing the relative increases in price of the imported and the local articles.

Mr. GREGORY.—We shall be prepared to go fully into that matter on Tuesday, when we are dealing with larger items.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That may be; but I fancy that much that is now being done may have to be reviewed. I know the Country party intend to put up a fight



on these items; if so, after the waste of time on wire netting and kindred items, we cannot dispose of the matter within the next fifty minutes. Further, I may say that I do not see why the implements and machinery mentioned in item 161 should not also be placed in item 163, seeing that all are used for the same purposes and by the same class of persons. The debate has shown that unless an honorable member has the support of the Government, it is impossible to obtain any increase in the duties, and I do not intend to weary the Committee in the absence of any prospect of success. I leave the Minister with the suggestions I have made.

Mr. GREENE.—I do not propose to do anything at present.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [3.14].—This is, comparatively, only a small item, but I ask the Minister to include in it side-delivery reapers, side-delivery hay rakes, combined hay rakes and tedders, hay loaders, and grain drills, n.e.i. These machines are very rarely used; for instance, the side-delivery reaper is an old type of harvesting machine that was used before the reaper and binder was invented. The total annual sale of these machines in Australia amounts to less than fifty. Most of them are sold in Queensland, where they are used for harvesting lucerne seed, and on account of the small demand no Australian manufacturer would undertake to make them. At present they fall under item 161, agricultural implements n.e.i., 35 per cent. general Tariff. That is the side delivery reaper. Then there is the side delivery hay rake. A very limited number of these machines are imported, and they are used mostly in harvesting sub-irrigated lucerne. On account of their large size they cannot be used to advantage in irrigated paddocks checked for irrigated lucerne. As they are not bought in large quantities, no Australian manufacturer is likely to interest himself in them. I shall be satisfied if the Minister will make a record of these matters at present. It would be unfair to ask him to make an alteration now, but he can look into them, and may be able later to see his way clear to place on the free list certain machines, some of them fairly well obsolete, that are still required for specific purposes, and are not being manufactured in Australia.

Mr. GREENE.—We might postpone the item, and if, after we have concluded dealing with agricultural implements there are any which, on investigation, we find ought to be included in this item, we can then include them.

Mr. CHARLTON.—We might pass the item, and then, if the Minister finds that what the honorable member says is correct, it can be recommended.

Mr. GREENE.—I am willing to do that.

Mr. GREGORY.—If all the items up to 164 are passed, will the Minister agree to report progress?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes, if you give me up to 164 inclusive.

Mr. GREGORY.—Then, when we reach item 165 I want to deal with the whole aspect of the importation of agricultural machines into Australia. I propose to show the cost of these machines in foreign countries, New Zealand and elsewhere, and to deal generally with the question in all its phases in order to prove that the statements supplied to the Minister were not wholly in accordance with the facts. Of course, in saying that I have no desire to reflect on the Minister in any way. I shall hand copies of my suggested amendments to the Minister, so that he may have them investigated, and let the Committee know what he thinks about them.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.20].—The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) wants, in an "airy-fairy" way to get rid of every item up to 165. If we pass items 161-4 as they stand we shall place ourselves in an anomalous position as regards item 165. The articles enumerated in those items are just as important as those in item 165. I do not see how item 165 can govern them, but if it is to govern them the position may be made worse. Will the Minister do anything in connexion with the threshers I have mentioned in item 161?

Mr. GREENE.—I do not know anything about it, and do not propose to deal with it now in any case. If, later on, after investigation, we see that it is desirable to do something, we may.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I understand that the Minister has promised the honorable member for Dampier to re-open the item later for the inclusion in the free list,



if necessary, of any machines that the honorable member for Dampier desires. I shall not oppose the honorable member for Dampier's suggestion to place the machines he has enumerated on the free list, because I do not think they are manufactured in Australia. I understand that item 160 is to be passed now, and may be recommitted if that is found necessary. Will the Minister promise that if I can satisfy him in the meantime as to the position of the thresher referred to, he will recommit the item for that purpose also?

Mr. GREENE.—I will promise the honorable member to reconsider it.

Item agreed to.

Item 161 (Agricultural, horticultural, and viticultural machinery and implements, n.e.i.).

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.23].—Why is the duty different on item 163 from what it is on 161 and 162? The machines covered by item 161 are dutiable at 22½ per cent. British, 30 per cent. intermediate, and 35 per cent. general.

Mr. GREGORY.—They are nearly all Canadian and American, so that you can say 35 per cent. for pretty well all of them.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Thirty-five per cent. is not nearly enough for anything associated with Canadian machinery manufacture.

Mr. GREENE.—I do not propose to give any more.

Mr. GREGORY.—The natural protection at present is over 50 per cent.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If it were not so serious one could laugh at the natural protection which the honorable member so frequently quotes.

Mr. GREGORY.—On the single grain drill, without any duty at all, the importing cost is actually 81 per cent. of the invoice value.

Mr. MATHEWS.—There is no such thing as natural protection when a manufacturer is determined to get a market, because he can dump until he has thrown his local competitors out of business, and then charge what he likes. Local manufacturers would do the same thing if they could. I do not claim that they are angels. In this matter the Canadian and American manufacturers assist one another whenever they can.

If the Canadian manufacturers are not making a certain portion of a machine they get it placed on the free list, so that it can come in from the United States of America from the same firm, with the same money invested. Now the war is over, we have to face the question of re-establishing our position. Europe and Australia are burdened through having borrowed enormous sums of money. The United States of America is in exactly the opposite position, although there the people have their own difficulties to face. They find that, with the high rate of exchange, it is impossible to trade with other countries. They are forcing down wages in that country by the threat of withdrawing food supplies. It is essential for them to get into the markets of the world again, and they will do it by hook or by crook. I do not want Australia to suffer in consequence. I do not wish to see thousands of men in my electorate thrown out of employment.

Mr. GREGORY.—They will not send us machinery unless we can send them something back.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The politicians of the United States of America are racking their brains to discover some method of improving the position in which they find themselves. The cables show that they recognise the peculiar position they are in, and I am sure that some peculiar method will be resorted to in order to remedy it. That country is our principal competitor in agricultural implements. What position are we to occupy so far as trade with the United States of America is concerned? Although we have the "stinking fish" crowd, headed by Knight and Ashworth, the "buttoners" for the *Age* newspaper, talking about economy, and howling that we are "going to the dogs," we know that Australia is as financial, and offers as good a market as any other country in the world. Our finances are just as stable, and we are certainly one of the countries that the United States of America will look to to trade with.

Mr. GREGORY.—A lot of credit is due to us, is it not, for the way we paid our debt to the Old Country for the upkeep of our troops?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Whatever peculiar methods we may have resorted to to pay



our debts, they are not one scrap more discreditable than those which some nations adopted to reach their present financial position. I do not give a "jot" for the men who own the big manufacturing industries in my electorate or for the millions of money they have invested, but I am deeply concerned about all the people who are employed in those industries.

Mr. ATKINSON.—What do you want?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I want the whole of these articles placed under the same heading as 163A, and made dutiable at 27½ per cent. British, 35 per cent. intermediate, and 40 per cent. general. The Minister has promised certain legislation to obviate the effects of dumping on our industries, but a great deal of damage may be done before he can interfere. The honorable member for Dampier is "wagging his ear" for joy at the thought of all the items up to 164 inclusive being put through as they stand, because they are so near to Free Trade.

Mr. GREGORY.—Free Trade, with duties of 35 per cent. and 40 per cent.?

Mr. MATHEWS.—They are just as near Free Trade as the honorable member can desire for those commodities.

Mr. GREGORY.—The articles mentioned in this item are not used very much, and so I was asking the Minister to consider my suggestion.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I know the honorable member desires to have them passed for a certain other purpose.

Mr. GREGORY.—You will change your opinion next week when we are dealing with other items.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I know the honorable member wants to get to item 165 for a very special reason. In my opinion the articles covered by these intervening items are not sufficiently protected, though I know it is useless to submit any amendment unless I can get the Minister's approval. These items deserve very special consideration. Will the Minister say why it was thought desirable to differentiate between these items and item 163?

Mr. GREENE.—Because we think the protection is adequate in each instance.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I am not going to ask the Minister if he has given each item his personal consideration, because I might be inclined to doubt his assurance if he said he had, as I know that certain resolutions have been passed on to him.

There has been a considerable increase in the importation of agricultural machinery mentioned in these items. For instance, in 1910-11, the imports were valued at £392,835; in 1915-16, £275,706; in 1916-17, £234,918; in 1917-18, £183,369. These were war years, but, in 1918-19, after the armistice, the imports were £418,196; in 1919-20, £302,336; and for the ten months of the current year, £341,549. This is evidence enough, surely, that the higher duties have not prevented importations.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Perhaps the Minister will meet the member for Melbourne Ports by allowing item 161 to pass, and making the Tariff in item 162 the same as in item 163.

Mr. GREENE.—I cannot agree to that, because I think these duties are sufficient.

Item agreed to.

Item 162—

Chaffcutters and horse gears; corn shellers; corn huskers; cultivators, n.e.i.; harrows, ploughs other, plough shares, plough mould boards; scarifiers, ad val., British, 22½ per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.38].—The secretary of the Agricultural Implement Union assures me that this duty has had no effect upon importation, and that they are unable to extract satisfactory wages from the importing companies. I suggest that the Tariff be the same as in item 163. The figures show that for the ten months of the current year there have been large importations. The articles mentioned in this item are of as much importance as wire.

Mr. GREGORY.—I admit that; but I think you will admit there has been a substantial increase in the duty which, with the extra cost of freight and insurance, ought to be sufficient.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I have already shown that if the United States of America and Canadian companies desire to get into the Australian market, the present duty and the higher freights will not prevent them.

Mr. GREGORY.—That is a reflection upon our local manufacturers and employees.

Mr. MATHEWS.—It is no reflection at all.

Mr. STEWART.—Yes, it is. There must be something wrong somewhere.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Even the Japanese with their allegedly cheap labour have



found it necessary to take action to prevent dumping in Japan, and it cannot be said that their purpose is to protect Japanese manufacturers from cheaper labour in, say, the United States of America. We know that their anti-dumping legislation is not aimed at Australia, so it must be against some other country.

Mr. STEWART.—It is quite likely that the Japanese manufacturers are afraid of Canadian and American brains and efficient plants.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Now, if I made the suggestion that the farmers of Australia were afraid of the brains and energy of farmers in other countries, the honorable member for Wimmera would feel insulted; but I would make no such statement, because I know our farmers are as efficient as the farmers of any other country. I know also that our manufacturers are efficient, and that our workers use their brains in an endeavour to maintain their present conditions of living. These duties, together with the natural protection which some honorable members so often refer to, are not sufficient. They are to-day in the position of a man conducting a lolly shop at a profit of £5 per week on a capital of £10,000. The firms in the United States of America are over-capitalized, and are sheltering themselves behind the high rate of exchange. But they find that that is having a boomerang effect, and no one knows to what methods the industrial magnates may resort in order to collar the world's markets. Australia being a financially solvent country our market is one that the Americans would endeavour to exploit. I shall not further deal with this matter now, but on item 165 I shall have more opportunity of placing on record the methods of importing firms in their dealings with their employees and customers. I know that I shall be told that if they are charging more than they should they are making things easier for the local manufacturer. I shall take another opportunity of discussing the whole subject.

Item agreed to.

Items 163 (Combined corn sheller, husker, and bagger, &c.) and 164 (Churns) agreed to.

Progress reported.

## ADJOURNMENT.

### COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING.

Motion (by Mr. GREENE) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. FOLEY (Kalgoorlie) [3.47].—I desire to make an appeal to the Assistant Minister for Defence (Sir Granville Ryrie) in regard to the compulsory drill of students in the various technical educational establishments. The theological students throughout Australia are exempted from compulsory drill, and I ask the Assistant Minister to consider the placing of ordinary technical students on the same footing. The various schools of mines, technical schools, and continuation classes cost the States a good deal of money, and they are a boon to parents who, through them, can give their children an education that would not otherwise be possible. I have in mind particularly the Kalgoorlie School of Mines, the students of which are mainly the sons of working miners. During my recent visit to Kalgoorlie I heard of four graduates from that school who have gone to different parts of the world to take up good scientific appointments. Whilst I desire to say nothing to the detriment of theologians, I think that well-trained scientists are just as good an asset to the community, and they are also a decided advertisement for Australia if they obtain important positions in other parts of the world.

Sir GRANVILLE RYRIE (North Sydney—Assistant Minister for Defence) [3.51].—I am prepared to see that consideration is given to the matter raised by the honorable member for Kalgoorlie, who may rest assured that the Government are favorably disposed towards trainees, and will do their utmost to insure that no hardship is placed upon them. Everything possible will be done to see that their studies are not interfered with by the drill. However, the consideration of this matter may well be deferred until the new Defence Bill is before the House.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 3.53 p.m.



## House of Representatives.

Tuesday, 14 June, 1921.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

### MARANOA ELECTION.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.—Yesterday I issued a writ in connexion with the by-election for the Maranoa Division. The dates fixed therein are those announced to the House last week.

### BUSINESS OF THE SESSION.

Mr. RYAN.—Can the Acting Prime Minister tell me what legislation the Government proposes to pass this session in addition to the Tariff?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Our original intention was to deal with the Tariff only, and, of course, any consequential legislation, and then, if possible, to have a short recess before beginning the important work which lies ahead, and which at the moment seems likely to take us into the middle of next year. Last week a series of resolutions passed in this State were put before me, the effect of which was that Parliament should sit longer. This House, however, sits longer than any other legislative body in the Empire, excepting the House of Commons; and I am not quite clear that, taking the whole year through, we do not sit as long as the House of Commons. In Canada, Parliament sits for four or five months in the year, and, in South Africa, for four months. Here we are sitting almost perpetually. So far as I know at the moment, the business of the session will be the Tariff and incidental legislation, and, of course, Supply for the early months of the next financial year.

### ASSISTANT TRADE COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. MACKAY.—Have appointments yet been made, or is it intended to make any, to the position of Assistant Trade Commissioner for Shanghai and Hong Kong, for which applications were asked some months ago and, I understand, some 3,000 applications received.

Mr. GREENE.—It is intended to make the appointments when Parliament has voted the necessary appropriation.

### NORTHERN TERRITORY.

#### CENSORSHIP OF TELEGRAMS—PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION.

Mr. GREGORY.—On behalf of the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page) I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether the statement emanating from many quarters in Darwin is correct, that there is a political censorship in operation over press and private telegrams sent by persons who advocate representation for the Territory? If so, by what authority, and by what Department, is the censoring done?

Mr. RYAN.—I was asked to put the same question.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I, too, have been approached on the subject. There is no truth whatever in the statement that telegrams are censored. The Administrator at Darwin has been communicated with by telegraph, and his reply is this—

Local postmaster knows nothing of any censorship, nor of any interference of any kind with telegrams, nor do I. The whole thing is a figment of imagination.

Mr. WATKINS.—In view of the isolation of the Northern Territory, and the continued requests of its inhabitants, who are taxpayers of the Commonwealth, for representation in this Parliament, has the Government yet considered how such representation can be given, and whether it should be by the election of a member, either exercising or not exercising a vote?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The Government has made a brave attempt to give representation to the people of the Northern Territory, but neither House will sanction it. What more can Ministers do? We proposed to give the Northern Territory representation in the Senate.

Mr. RYAN.—Stake the existence of the Government on the proposal.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I shall think over that suggestion.

### PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCE.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Has the Acting Prime Minister read the newspaper report of a speech by the honorable member for



Cowper (Dr. Earle Page), in which it is suggested, in effect, that members should be paid £1,000 for each session, instead of per annum, and that the session should, if possible be cut down to three weeks? Is the right honorable gentleman, in view of this suggestion, prepared to agree to charging for questions upon notice, or without notice, and so much per yard for speeches, in order to bring about that efficiency, economy, and effective despatch of business which is so desired by the honorable member for Cowper?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member for Cowper is a new, and in some respects a young member. In my thirty years' experience, I have seen many attempts to reform Parliament. I have not read the speech referred to.

Mr. RYAN.—You will read it, and refer it to Cabinet?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I shall read it, though I do not know that I shall refer it to Cabinet. Certainly I shall not refer to Cabinet revolutionary proposals for still further increasing salaries.

#### CITRUS CANKER.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—On behalf of the honorable member for Cowper (Dr. Earle Page), I wish to know from the Minister for Trade and Customs whether, in view of the danger of citrus canker being introduced into Australia, it is not advisable, for the present at any rate, to prohibit the importation of all citrus fruits?

Mr. GREENE.—The matter has received careful consideration. No citrus tree, and no portion of a citrus tree, may be imported into this country until it has been subjected to a rigorous quarantine, and under no circumstances may a citrus tree, or portion of a tree, including fruit, be imported from countries in which canker is known to exist.

#### TELEPHONES.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—As many thousands of applications for telephone connexion remain undealt with, is the Postmaster-General in a position to say whether early relief may be expected? The present situation is causing the gravest inconvenience. Can the Postmaster-General expedite the giving of telephone connexion?

Mr. WISE.—We have been doing all we can for months past to expedite the

giving of telephone service to those who apply for it.

#### GERMAN INDEMNITY.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I have heard that information has been received concerning the allocation of the German indemnity, and that a certain sum has been ear-marked to meet the claims of merchant seamen, who fell into the hands of enemy powers, for (1) personal injury and (2) in respect to dangerous work performed while interned in Germany. Does the Acting Prime Minister know anything of the matter?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Absolutely nothing.

#### MILLIONAIRES AND BENEVOLENT INSTITUTIONS.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I noticed a statement in the press the other day to the effect that Commonwealth income tax returns were received from some twenty-three millionaires, and approximately forty or fifty semi-millionaires. I also saw a paragraph in the newspapers on the same date requesting assistance for a benevolent institution. In those circumstances, will the Acting Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Cook) furnish me, not for publication, but for my own information, with the names of any of the gentlemen who are in such a fortunate position, in order that they may be approached with a request to make a donation of any cast-off clothing, or other articles, they do not require, since it would be very acceptable to the poor in my district?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—If the honorable member analyses the position of some of the alleged millionaires to whom he refers he will find that they have many complaints concerning their obligations, which, they say, they are unable to meet.

#### SOLDIERS' INSURANCE.

Dr. MALONEY.—Will the Acting Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Cook) cable to the United States of America, Canada, South Africa, and the United Kingdom for full information concerning (a) the insurance of soldiers engaged during the war; (b) the repatriation of returned soldiers, and (c) the pensions given to returned soldiers and dependants. Will the Acting Prime Minister have such



information epitomized and distributed to honorable members and the press?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I shall be glad to do that. I shall welcome any such information that we may obtain on this subject, because I fancy it will not hurt us.

#### RETURN OF MR. OXENHAM.

Mr. ANSTEY.—I desire to ask the Postmaster-General (Mr. Wise) if he has noticed that Mr. Oxenham is returning to Australia on the *Niagara*, and that an outbreak of small-pox has occurred on that vessel. In the interests of the members of this Chamber, will he avoid coming in contact with this gentleman?

Mr. WISE.—Mr. Oxenham was in this building on Friday last.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—(By leave.)—I move—

That leave of absence for one month be given to the honorable member for Lang (Sir Elliot Johnson) on the ground of ill-health, and to the honorable member for Grey (Mr Poynton) on the ground of urgent public business.

I am sure it is a matter of the deepest regret to all of us that Mr. Speaker is still unable to resume his duties. He is experiencing a severe illness, and our sympathies go out to him in his trouble.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

#### COMMONWEALTH STEAMERS.

##### LACK OF CARGO.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—On the 7th June, the honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) asked a question in regard to vessels of the Commonwealth Government Line, said to be held up owing to lack of cargo. I have had inquiries made in connexion with the matter, and find that the *Eurelia* is not laid up for lack of cargo, but for the purpose of undergoing reconstruction of her store freezing chamber. Other vessels of the Line are, however, held up through inability to obtain payable cargo. While there is a general shortage of cargo, business is offering in various directions; but freights have fallen so low as to make this business, which consists mainly of bulk cargoes from Australia to places from the majority of which there is no back loading, quite un-

attractive on the present running costs. As I stated a few days ago, our vessels are, so far as I can judge, as well off as most vessels engaged in the trade from Australia to the United Kingdom.

Mr. GREGORY.—I wish the Minister had disclosed the information he is now giving a few days ago, when we were discussing certain items in the Tariff.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I am telling the honorable member now.

#### GLOUCESTER-GRAFTON TELEPHONE.

Mr. GREGORY (for Dr. EARLE PAGE) asked the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

Whether, in view of the statement of the Metal Manufacturers Limited at Port Kembla, that they were able to supply the Telephone Department with any quantity of copper wire, he will immediately take steps to carry out the erection of the copper metallic circuit on the north coast of New South Wales, from Gloucester to Grafton, which has been reported on favorably for four years, and has been held up owing to lack of copper wire, and the absence of which is said to be causing grave disabilities to the whole of the north coast?

Mr. WISE.—The erection of this line is not dependent upon the wire required being procurable, but upon the necessary funds being available. The matter will be considered in connexion with other works of a similar kind when financial arrangements for the coming year are under consideration.

#### IRON AND STEEL IMPORTS.

Mr. WATKINS asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

In connexion with the Dumping Bill which he has promised to introduce immediately after the Tariff is disposed of, will he state if it is his intention to demand a certificate on all imports of iron and steel from the United Kingdom that they are wholly produced and manufactured in that country?

Mr. GREENE.—If Parliament approves of the Bill, it will contain adequate provisions to effect what the honorable member has in mind.

#### CZECHO-SLOVAKIAN EXCHANGE RATE.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

In view of the danger of difference of exchange dumping, will he inform the House what



is the exchange rate with the Czecho-Slovakian nation?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The Prague rate of exchange on London on 7th June was 266 krone to the pound sterling. I might add that the par of exchange with the late Austro-Hungarian Empire was 24 krone to the pound sterling.

## EXCHANGE AND DUMPING BILLS.

Mr. WATKINS asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

In view of the definite promise to introduce Bills to deal with matters of exchange and dumping, will he endeavour to circulate these measures during the debate on the present Tariff, so as to expedite the passage of these proposed Bills through Parliament?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes.

## MONT PARK HOSPITAL—TRANSFER OF PATIENTS.

Mr. LISTER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

1. How did the twenty soldiers who were ordered to be taken from No. 16 A.G.H., Mont Park, on 27th April, to the Sunbury and Kew Lunatic Asylums, come under the authority of the Inspector-General of the Insane?

2. What is the nature of the agreement between the Repatriation Commission and the State Government or the Inspector-General of the Insane in regard to the removal and future maintenance of those soldiers, and at what cost?

3. What certificates under the Lunacy Act have been given in regard to the mental condition of those soldiers? By whom were they given, and when were those certificates signed?

Mr. GROOM (for Mr. RODGERS).—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. The extent of the Commonwealth's constitutional power to deal with mental cases is doubtful, and it was, therefore, in 1915, deemed advisable to utilize the machinery of the Lunacy Departments of the several States, distinguishing civil from military cases. With a view to saving the ex-soldier from certain disabilities which were regarded as resulting from the application of the civil law, certain States passed special legislation. In those States which have passed this special legislation, certification under the Lunacy Act is not required, but should an ex-soldier be transferred to a State mental institution, certification is necessary. In that case, the patient passes under the jurisdiction of the State Lunacy Departments, of which the Inspector-General of the Insane is the chief executive officer.

2. The honorable member has already been informed by answers to his question of the 7th instant of the circumstances under which, as a temporary arrangement, it was proposed to transfer twenty patients from No. 16 A.G.H. to Sunbury and Kew Asylums. The relatives of the patients were communicated with to this effect. The per diem cost was to be 25s.

3. The certificates as required by the State Lunacy Act were signed by Drs. H. M. James and P. J. Kelly on 27th April, 1921.

## PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Arbitration (Public Service) Act—Determination by the Arbitrator (with reference to the Basic Wage, &c.)—No. 2 of 1921—In the matter of the Commonwealth Public Service Clerical Association, Post and Telegraph Association, Commonwealth Postmasters Association, Australian Letter Carriers Association, Federated Public Service Assistants Association, Postal Electricians Union, Postal Linemen's Union, Commonwealth Public Service Artisans Association, General Division Union of the Trade and Customs Department, General Division Telephone Officers Association, Postal Sorters Union, Line Inspectors Association, and the Meat Inspectors Association.

Papua—Ordinances of 1920—

No. 13—Supplementary Appropriation (No. 3), 1919-1920.

No. 14—Trust Fund Advances.

No. 20—Supply (No. 3), 1920-1921.

No. 21—Appropriation, 1920-1921.

No. 22—Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1), 1920-1921.

Public Service Act—Appointment of S. F. Whittington, Department of the Treasury.  
Public Service Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1921, No. 101.

## TARIFF.

*In Committee of Ways and Means:*

Consideration resumed from 10th June (*vide* page 8995):

### DIVISION V.—METALS AND MACHINERY.\*

\*Motive power, engine combinations, and power connexions are dutiable under their respective headings when not integral parts of machines, machinery, or machine tools.

### Item 165—

(A) Reaper threshers and harvesters n.e.i., ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

(B) Stripper harvesters, each, British, £12; intermediate, £14; general, £15; or ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher duty.



**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [3.20].—I move—

That the following words be inserted after sub-item (A):—"And on and after 15th June, 1921, British, £10; intermediate, £12; general, £14."

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—I suppose the honorable member cannot see his way clear to wipe out the duties altogether?

**Mr. GREGORY.**—I would be very glad to do so. It would be the best thing for Australia if this machinery could be brought in free. I shall endeavour to prove that the natural protection accorded, in connexion with the importation of these lines of machinery, should be more than ample to give a fair measure of protection to Australian manufacturers.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—It is a pity Australia cannot afford to give you another taste of what you really want.

**Mr. GREGORY.**—I respect the honorable member, but it is clear that his sympathies are not with the people in the back country. I cannot understand that he should fail to foresee the trouble which is brewing for city workers with the discouragement, if not the destruction, of primary industries. It has been suggested during the deliberations of the Committee that I am delaying progress and generally incurring unnecessary expense to the country. But I am here to put the case for those engaged in primary production; and, although there may be very little result from my efforts in this Chamber, I trust and expect that it will be perceived elsewhere, and in the country. The people to-day are realizing that every action or decision of this Government tends, as a whole, to increase concentration in the great cities. Already the evil resulting from concentration is apparent in the large numbers of unemployed to be found to-day in several of the State capitals. In the course of discussing the rates of duties as set out in the schedule, and as proposed to be amended by the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene), no effort has been made to prove that the various increases have become necessary for the welfare of Australian industries. There has been much talk about a proposed Board of Trade; but nothing has been

said of the fact that a Board of Trade was appointed by the Government nearly two years ago. Has that Board tendered any report concerning any of the grave matters which have come before the Committee during the Tariff discussion? Has the Board offered any opinions or recommendations? So far as honorable members have been advised, it has neither prepared nor presented any report concerning the huge increases of Customs duties. Another significant fact is that, in all that has been said during the deliberations of this Committee, honorable members have not been informed that either the primary producer or the importer or the consumer has been consulted. It appears that only one section of the community has been approached, and that is the section represented by the Chamber of Manufactures. There have been speeches by the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes), the Acting Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Cook), the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene), and other members of the Government, one after another. All are in accord in realizing the effects of the war. They have impressed upon the public two great essentials for the well-being of Australia—the one being increased population, and the other enhanced production. I agree that without the latter, certainly, we shall never be able to pay off Australia's tremendous war debt. Without a big increase of population, the burden of taxation per head must become unbearable. Considerable expenditure is now being devoted to immigration. Are the newcomers being conveyed here for the purpose of entering our factories; or are we going to ask them, and our own young Australians as they grow up, to go out on the land and take up the heavy responsibilities involved in primary production to-day, while at the same time adding the further handicap of huge imposts by way of Customs duties? If industries are to be built up here, why should not the whole community share fairly in carrying the burden? It is grossly unfair that one section should be loaded with the whole. I can only express the hope that punishment will fall upon this Government similar to that which was meted out to the Government who stood behind the McKinley Tariff, in the



United States of America; that is to say, that they will be promptly kicked out. Can it be shown by the Minister, or by any one else, that Australian manufactures are languishing? Can it be demonstrated that imports are alarmingly increasing, and that business is being taken away from our own manufacturers? I can show by statistics that such is not the case. It cannot be seriously suggested that our manufacturers are becoming impoverished. In all that has been said for the latter, no word has been heard about the grave injury which is threatening the Australian consumer. As for the Australian worker, I yield to none in my admiration for him. During the great struggle no man of any of the nations showed finer initiative, sounder judgment, or greater courage. Surely, then, those same characteristics should make the Australian worker, as a factory employee, second to none. What with the natural protection afforded to our manufacturers, together with the consideration which has been given them by the framers of past Tariffs, they should be able to stand "on their own" to-day. I shall show that the agricultural machinery industry has prospered in Australia under the moderate duties that have been imposed in the past. One of the reasons given in support of high protective duties is the alleged low rate of wages paid by manufacturers outside of Australia, and I intend to expose that fallacy. I can show from Canadian and Australian statistics that the employees in this industry in Canada to-day are paid at a far higher rate than are those in Australia. I can show also that when, in 1914, the Inter-State Commission was giving special consideration to the question of increased duties, there was no request made for increased duties by the big manufacturers of agricultural implements in Australia. I intend to show further that, relatively to production and population, New Zealand manufactures more agricultural machinery than does Australia, and that machinery is sold more cheaply in New Zealand than it is here.

Mr. STEWART.—In spite of the figures quoted by the Minister.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Can the honorable member vouch for the accuracy of his figures?

Mr. GREGORY.—I intend to take up some time in the consideration of this question, and, amongst other things, I intend to let honorable members know that the farmer in Canada can purchase agricultural machinery for about half the price that has to be paid for it in Australia. The natural protection from Canada averages nearly 50 per cent., including freight, insurance, and exchange. With a duty of 45 per cent., and taking present exchange values with an allowance for freight and insurance as well, the Tariff protection from Canada works out at 62.59 per cent., or nearly 63 per cent. I have mentioned some of the questions I intend to raise on this item, and they should be fully answered before these onerous duties are placed on this class of machinery. In connexion with this industry, I wish to make some comparisons between Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Honorable members will understand that I quote from reports and from statistics taken from the latest *Year-books* available. I have said that this industry has made progress in Australia under the low Tariff we had in existence up to 1911. In 1908, the number of persons employed in the industry here was 3,134, and the annual production amounted in value to £879,000. In 1911, the number employed in the industry had increased to 5,156, and the value of the annual production to £1,656,000, or an increase of nearly 100 per cent., in three years. Another satisfactory feature was that the value of production per employee increased in the same period from £281 in 1908 to £322 in 1911. Whilst the value of local production was nearly doubled in the period, importations did not increase in the same way. The percentage of imports to local production in this industry in 1908 was 30 per cent.; in 1909, 24 per cent.; in 1910, 27 per cent.; and in 1911, 27 per cent.; an average during those years of, roughly, 25 per cent. In the years following, there was a decline in local production due to many causes, and amongst them the drought and the war. The average percentage of imports to local production in 1913 was 25 per cent.; in 1914, 26 per cent.; in 1915, 28 per cent.; in 1916, 19 per cent.; in 1917, 25 per cent.; and in 1918, 32 per cent. I should like honorable members to pay particular attention



to these figures, because they show that, roughly, 25 per cent. of the agricultural machinery used in Australia has been imported, and 75 per cent. of it has been locally manufactured. The reason why I wish to make this quite clear is that every £1 imposed by way of duty means actually £4 added to the price of the article to the consumer. Despite what the Minister has said, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the local manufacturer has kept his prices well up to what similar agricultural machinery can be sold for by the importer.

Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member holds that the total charge on the industry is four times the amount of duty collected at the Customs?

Mr. GREGORY.—I say that as three-fourths of the agricultural machinery used in Australia is made here, and as the local manufacturer keeps his prices as close as he can to the price of the imported machinery, every increase of £1 in the Tariff duty means an actual increase in the cost of £4 to the consumer.

Mr. GREENE.—Granted that the honorable member's argument is right, which I do not admit, then the total charge on the industry represents four times the amount of duty collected?

Mr. GREGORY.—It comes to pretty nearly that.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member can make figures do anything.

Mr. GREGORY.—I want those who have to pay for this machinery to take a greater interest in the Tariff. I have stated that in 1911 the local production of this machinery amounted in value to £1,656,000. There was a fall in production, and in 1918 it amounted in value to only £1,415,000.

Mr. GREENE.—Notwithstanding the increased prices.

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes, but the war and the drought have to be considered.

Mr. GREENE.—There was an increase in the price of steel and general material used in the industry, and the honorable member's figures of £1,415,000 would represent proportionately that much less. If the increase in the price had been 30 per cent., there would be reduction of one-third in the value of agricultural machinery turned out.

Mr. GREGORY.—The figures show that the reduction amounted to about £240,000 in value. In my view, the chief reason for that was the war, and, secondly, reduced consumption. No one knows better than does the Minister that the area put under cultivation was considerably reduced before 1918.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—There would be fluctuations due to big harvests and small harvests.

Mr. GREGORY.—We had some very small harvests prior to 1918, and no one knows better than does the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) that the prices of both imported and local agricultural machinery were soaring up, and that machinery that had been thrown on the scrap heap was recovered, repaired, and put into use again. I received a most important letter about four months ago from the president of the Stock-owners Association of New South Wales, in which he told me that people were attending sales, and paying fabulous prices for old machinery, which was subsequently repaired and made effective, because of the heavy cost of new machinery. It is clear, therefore, that, owing to the war and increased prices, a falling off in production was natural in the period to which I have referred. There was also a reduction in our exports of agricultural machinery from Australia. In this connexion, I propose to quote a statement made by Mr. Walmsley, who was a member of the Tariff Commission in 1906, and who deals with this phase of the question. He says—

The Commonwealth *Year-Book*, which is simply an official compilation of facts, vol. 7, 1914, page 482, says:—"The following table shows the progress of this industry to have been very satisfactory. During the four years the number of establishments increased 13½ per cent., the number of employees 51 per cent., and the value of plants and machinery 107 per cent."

That was during the operation of the 1908-11 Tariff. Volume X. of the *Year-Book* for 1917, page 494, says:—

The following table shows the progress of this industry in the five years, 1910-15, to have been very satisfactory. A general decline has taken place during the latter part of the period, attributable to various causes, the recent drought, and a reduction of exports to other countries being the principal contributing factors.



Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Our export trade was destroyed when we lost the Argentine trade.

Mr. GREGORY.—The big reduction in the local manufacture of agricultural implements is largely due to the loss of our export trade. I have here figures showing that the export trade from Australia in 1913 was valued at £192,000, whereas in 1918-19 it had dropped to £28,036.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We had the Argentine trade, and lost it.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think that the stripper harvester has gone somewhat out of fashion in the Argentine.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member's statement has no bearing upon the position unless he can show how much agricultural machinery the Argentine imported from other countries.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am merely attempting to assign one of the reasons for our decreased productions in Australia. Why we lost the export trade, I cannot say.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member will admit that it was owing to the Canadian Government subsidizing the vessels trading to the Argentine.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not know anything about that. I wish, however, to deal with the statement made by the Minister in connexion with the subsidizing of shipping services from Canada to Australia. The honorable gentleman's statement may have been correct, but if he referred to agricultural machinery, it was his duty, before making it, to consult the importers with the object of ascertaining their views upon the question. Evidently he did not do that. When we consider the effects of the war, coupled with the loss of our export trade, we shall see that there has been no falling-off in production, so far as the industry in Australia is concerned. It has been carried on successfully under the low duties which were operating, particularly in 1908 and 1913, when the industry made much greater strides than it has made at any later period.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member cannot get away from the Argentine so lightly as that.

Mr. GREGORY.—I would further point out that the wages paid in the industry in Australia do not compare with those paid in the industry in Canada. I invite my Labour friends opposite, who so strenuously support the imposition of high duties, to carefully examine figures which I am about to submit in this connexion. The contention that the wages paid in Canada are much lower than those paid in Australia, and that, therefore, the imported article can be produced much cheaper there than it can be manufactured locally, is absolutely false, and false to the knowledge of those who make it. The fact is indisputable that the wages paid in Australia are very much lower than are the wages paid in Canada. The particulars which I am about to quote are taken from the *Commonwealth Year-Book* No. XII. for the year 1918, and the *Census of Manufacturers* for the Dominion of Canada for the same year. In Australia the salaried employees numbered 346, and the average salary paid to them was £170 2s. In Canada there were 1,129 salaried employees whose average salary was £292 10s. In Australia, for 2,846 operatives, their wages averaged £129 18s. In Canada, the factory operatives numbered 8,966, and their average wage was £192 12s. It cannot, therefore, be argued that the imposition of higher duties is necessary because the wages paid in Australia are higher than those which are paid in Canada. As a matter of fact, the wage-earners of the industry in the Commonwealth receive upon an average 32½ per cent. less than do the employees of the industry in Canada, whilst, taking all hands into consideration, the wages paid in Australia are 34 per cent. less than those paid in Canada for the whole year. When we were dealing with the iron duties, I pointed out how coal has to be imported by Canada for industrial purposes, and how the manufacturers of that Dominion have to compete with the manufacturers of the United States of America. They have to face similar competition in regard to agricultural machinery.

Mr. GREENE.—What is the Canadian Tariff upon agricultural machinery?

Mr. GREGORY.—Speaking from memory, I think that it is from 12½ to



15 per cent. The cost of living in Australia has been high, and wages here ought not to be below those ruling in Canada. I should like to see our workmen getting wages equal to, or even higher than, those paid in any other country. But when we come to look at the added value of this class of machinery, we see at once that there must be something wrong with our manufacturers or our workmen, since we ought to be able to do at least as well as Canada in manufacturing agricultural implements and machinery. The added value of Australian agricultural implements works out at £652,406, or equal to £196 per person employed, while in Canada the added value works out at £3,506,760, or £347 10s. per person employed. The value of plant and machinery is scheduled at £355,830 in Australia, which is equal to £107 per employee, while in Canada, at the time covered by these statistics, it was £1,194,506, or £118 per employee. If we divide the gross value of production by the total number of persons employed, we shall arrive at the average value of the work done by each employee, and we shall find that in the case of Australia at this time it amounted to £424 6s. per head, while in Canada it was £690 10s. per head. These facts demand careful consideration. If our manufacturers are not following up-to-date methods, if they are not making the best use of the protection which has been afforded them by putting down complete plants, so as to be able to turn out their manufactures at the lowest rates, is it fair that other sections of the community should be called upon to carry these imposts in order that they may be protected? I think I have shown clearly that Australian workmen in this industry do not receive anything like the pay received by Canadian workmen, and that the value of the output per employee in Canada is considerably more than it is in Australia.

Mr. GREENE.—The figures referred to by the honorable member relate to the year 1918. Since then there has been an increase in wages here, and a reduction in wages in Canada.

Mr. GREGORY.—These are the latest statistics available. The honorable gentleman knows that our statistics are nearly always two years old.

Mr. GREENE.—I think the honorable member will find that wages rates in Australia to-day are higher than they are in

Canada, because since the year mentioned by him wages here have increased, while in Canada they have been reduced.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable gentleman knows that wages continued to increase in Canada, the United States of America, and the Old Country for some considerable time after the war. All over the world to-day there is a demand for a reduction of wages. Wages here did not go up to anything like the level reached in America during the war. Even in Great Britain the wages paid in the steel industry were considerably higher than in Australia.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But the honorable member's figures are three years old.

Mr. GREGORY.—I have taken them from the *Commonwealth Year-Book* for 1918, and they are the latest available.

I stated at the outset of my remarks that the Australian manufacturers of agricultural machinery made no request to the Inter-State Commission when it was inquiring into the Tariff for increased duties. I have here a report by Mr. Walmsley, in which it is stated that—

In March-October, 1914, the Inter-State Commission held an inquiry to hear requests regarding the 1908-11 Tariff on agricultural implements, but according to the report, which is dated August, 1916—nearly two years later—no information of any practical use was obtained, inasmuch as no manufacturer of consequence in Australia submitted any requests or furnished evidence in Australia.

A blacksmith, who was about to put on the market a potato digger, and a maker of peg-tooth harrows in Tasmania, who submitted that his trade was on the increase, and was profitably carried on, wanted a higher duty in order to expand his business more rapidly.

The Commission's inquiries covered the period from March to October, 1914. At that time we had manufacturers carrying on here under low Tariff duties. They were doing well, but the Inter-State Commission was requested to collect evidence from all parts of Australia in regard to the Tariff, and to make recommendations to this Parliament. They set apart the period from March to October, 1914, to an inquiry into the position of manufacturers of agricultural machinery, and we have it stated that no manufacturer of consequence submitted a request or furnished any evidence in support of higher duties.



Mr. MATHEWS.—As far back as 1908 we tried to get a duty of £16 per machine on stripper-harvesters.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am speaking now, not of politicians, but of manufacturers. Sworn evidence, taken before a Committee, and showing why these increased duties are necessary, should have been submitted to us; but we have had no such evidence. It is a shame that such duties should be proposed. The Inter-State Commission reported that—

The most noticeable feature in connexion with this industry is the fact that, except in regard to three comparatively unimportant branches, manufacturers have refrained from approaching the Commission, either in regard to unsatisfactory conditions which may exist in the manufacture of machines and implements in which they are at present engaged, or in respect to an extension of their operations to machines and implements which hitherto have not been commercially made here.

It is a fair inference from this that at that time local manufacturers were satisfied with the 1908-11 Tariff.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Is the honorable member aware that most Protectionists regard the Inter-State Commission, which made that report, as a Free Trade body?

Mr. GREGORY.—No. Any Commission that is appointed to take evidence will report according to the evidence submitted, and not according to its personal predilections. The honorable member, as a member of the Public Works Committee, has had to bring in reports according to the evidence submitted, although they were contrary to his own views.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I do not doubt the sincerity of the Inter-State Commission, but I would not expect them to propose higher duties.

Mr. GREGORY.—Here is a quotation from a report of the Commission, which shows that the honorable member, unintentionally, no doubt, was unfair in making such a remark:—

Notwithstanding that no evidence was adduced, the Commission did make some recommendations, chiefly in the direction of raising the general Tariff, in order to give a preference to implements, &c., of United Kingdom origin, which may partly account for the preference in the 1914 Tariff brought in twenty-one months before the Commission's report was presented to Parliament.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That gentleman says the Commission recommended increases in the duties without being asked.

Mr. GREGORY. — The Commission did recommend increases of the duties, although no manufacturer suggested that any increase was necessary.

Mr. MATHEWS. — That is a most remarkable statement to make. I think your information is astray.

Mr. GREGORY. — I am quoting a member of the Tariff Commission of 1906, and I take his statements as being absolutely correct, as I think they will be found to be. When the Minister (Mr. Greene) was speaking on the Tariff he said—

There are some subsidized freights in existence at the present moment. I can quote one instance which has come under my notice. I cannot give the particulars, because I have them in confidence, but I can give the figures. The ordinary freight at the present time is £10 per ton on a certain article; yet one firm is able to bring it to Australia at the rate of £1 per ton.

I am assuming that the Minister was referring then to agricultural machinery from Canada and the United States of America, and, if that be so, the honorable gentleman's reference was incorrect. The following is information supplied by importers of that machinery:—The steamer freight rate on agricultural machinery from the east coast of America—Montreal, and St. Johns, Canada, and New York, United States of America—for the year 1911-12 was 20s. per ton; for the year 1912-13 it was 22s. 6d. per ton; for the year 1913-14 it was 27s. 6d. per ton. In the early part of 1914 an effort was being made to establish a new shipping line in the American-Australian trade. Agents for some of the old lines offered the agricultural implement concerns and some other large shippers a five-years contract at an average rate for the whole period to the five principal Australian ports of 22s. 6d. per ton. The contract was accepted by both the International Harvester Company and Massey-Harris Company. That contract was effective from 1st June, 1914, to 31st May, 1919, and to the credit of the shipping companies, it can be said that they honoured their contract through that troublesome period, and gave the shippers their fair share of space in every ship they loaded



for Australia, although many of their charters cost them from £8 to £10 and more per ton. Had they wished to do so, the machinery companies could have made enormous profits for themselves out of the contract by charging their Australian customers the prevailing rates; but they did not do so. Their retail prices throughout the whole period were based on the average rate of 22s. 6d. per ton, and the farmers of Australia, instead of the importing implement companies, got the full benefit of this exceptionally favorable contract, which accounted for the moderate prices of imported machinery in Australia during the war period. At 1st June, 1919, the rate on agricultural machinery from America to Australia was increased to 67s. 6d. per ton, three times the average rate that prevailed during the war period, which has been, next to the increased Customs duties, a most important factor in fixing the present high prices for farm machinery. The Minister laid great stress on the small quantities of machinery being manufactured in Free Trade New Zealand, and I said that I would show that, so far as population and production are concerned, they produce more than is produced in Australia.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Yes; but they are not a farming people.

Mr. GREGORY.—But I say that relatively they produce more, and this makes the Minister's argument of less value. Where there is a small market, and implements have to be sent to four different receiving houses, the cost of administration is thereby increased, so that the Minister's statements are of little value.

Mr. STEWART.—The freight from the eastern American ports is greater to New Zealand than to Australia.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member for Indi (Mr. Robert Cook) told us of agricultural implements sold in Canada at £61, and in Free Trade New Zealand at £97.

Mr. GREGORY.—I shall show the cost in Canada, New Zealand, and here. The Minister, in reply to the honorable member for Swan (Mr. Prowse), said—

The honorable member claimed that if we had Free Trade in agricultural implements, the farmers would be in a position to buy in the markets of the world just as they are called

upon to sell in the markets of the world. He said that that would be an advantage to them. But why did not the honorable member argue his case from the point of view of the price of machinery in New Zealand? For the simple and sufficient reason that agricultural machinery there, which is supplied almost entirely by overseas manufacturers—because there is practically no agricultural implement making in the Dominion—is without exception dearer than it is in Australia.

To say that practically there is no agricultural implement making in the Dominion is much the same as to say that there is no agricultural machinery made in Australia in comparison with the United States of America.

Mr. MATHEWS.—How can machinery be produced in New Zealand without a Tariff?

Mr. GREGORY.—It is being produced.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Who will believe the figures?

Mr. GREGORY.—I have the latest Government statistics of both countries, which show that the Minister's statement is incorrect.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Are you referring to Mr. Massey's statement?

Mr. GREGORY.—I shall refer to that later. There is no more important statement than that of Mr. Massey—that owing to the increasing cost of machinery many people are going out of the agricultural industry in the Dominion.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Because the importers are exploiting them.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member did not hear my previous remarks, and, therefore he cannot follow the argument. To continue the information I have—The acreage under wheat, oats, and barley, the three principal cereal crops in both countries, was, for the year 1918-19, 9,013,166 in Australia. The total wages paid to the employees in the Australian agricultural implement factories in the same year was £428,522, which equals 11½d. per acre. The finished value of the product of the Australian agricultural machinery factories for the same year was £1,415,375, equaling 3s. 2d. per acre. The New Zealand acreage for the same year for the same crops was 399,469. Note the difference between the small area in New Zealand and the large area here. The wages paid to agricultural machinery employees for



the year was £128,185, equalling 6s. 5d. per acre. The total value of the finished product of the New Zealand factories for the year was £380,044, equalling 19s. per acre. The population of Australia for 1919 was 5,247,019. The wages paid in the industry equalled 1s. 8d. per head. The value of the finished product was 5s. 5d. per head. In New Zealand the population that year was 1,164,405. The wages paid per head of population was 2s. 3d. The value of the finished product per head was 6s. 6d. In the case of New Zealand, the population test is scarcely a fair one, for the reason that the population has been increasing there in about the same proportion as it has in Australia, while the acreage under crop has been decreasing. The acreage under the above three crops in New Zealand for the year 1909-10 was 729,500. For 1919 it was 399,469. In Australia the acreage in 1909-10 was 8,157,568, in 1919, 9,013,166. That calculation shows the wages to be 11½d. per acre in Australia, as against 6s. 5d. per acre in New Zealand, while the value of the production was 3s. 2d. per acre in Australia, as against 19s. in New Zealand.

MR. MATHEWS.—Those figures might mean anything.

MR. GREGORY.—The honorable member can try to work them out from the *Year-Book*, as I have done. I think I did so on a fair basis. I took the basis of the three principal crops which are applicable to both countries—wheat, oats, and barley, and their production per employee engaged.

MR. GREENE.—Has the honorable member worked the comparison out on wheat, oats, and barley only, and compared the relative productivity of the two countries on the basis of those three crops?

MR. GREGORY.—I took wheat, oats, and barley because they are the principal cereal crops. I did not include other crops that are not common to both countries. In the New Zealand *Year-Book* other products, which are different from ours, are given; but, taking it as a whole, I think it will be found that the way I have worked out the comparison is fair and equitable. If I had included the Australian hay crop it would have made the comparison very unfair.

MR. STEWART.—I hope the Minister replies to those statements. They are very striking.

MR. GREENE.—It is easy to reply to that part of it.

MR. GREGORY.—I find from the statistics that the manufacturer in Free Trade New Zealand pays his workmen a higher rate, because the percentage of the wages paid to the value of the finished product is 34 per cent. in New Zealand, as against 30 per cent. in Australia.

I wish to deal now with the prices of farming machinery, and quote the differences in various countries. I had intended to deal with the Argentine, but all the evidence I have shows that the reaper-thresher has not been a success there.

MR. MATHEWS.—They were a long time finding that out.

MR. GREGORY.—They were a good time finding it out, but that machine has never been properly on the market in the Argentine. It seemed hardly worth while to deal with that phase of the matter, but, perhaps, it will be just as well to do so, because I want to get these facts into *Hansard*, so that the people may know them. The Minister has been getting information from the Argentine, and has been asked how and from whom he obtained it, but he has not told us. It would be just as well if he did tell us how he obtains his information about prices in that country. A considerable time ago there was a good deal of comment on the difference in the prices of agricultural machinery in the Argentine and here; but I wish to deal more exhaustively to-day with the question of the prices in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. I will come back to the question of the Argentine prices later on if necessary, merely emphasizing the fact that the reaper-thresher never could be considered to be properly upon the market there. Several machines were sent there, but they were never an unqualified success, for several reasons, which I do not propose to go into now. As to reaper-threshers now being tried in the Argentine, they are engine-driven machines, quite different in design and construction from those which are being sold in Australia. Up to the present time none of these machines have



been sold in the Argentine. The International Harvester people are still engaged in developing the machine which they desire to put on the Argentine market.

The Minister compared the prices of different machines in New Zealand and Australia, notably disc ploughs, spring tine harrows, grain drills, and fertilizer drills. Why those machines, which have scarcely any sale in New Zealand, were selected it is difficult to understand. I have the following information:—

In pre-war times prices in New Zealand were, on the average, lower than in Australia, although the cost of delivering them, as well as distributing expenses, was much higher. Freight rates from the east coast of America to New Zealand were then from 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. higher than to Australia. On account of the broken nature of the country it has been found necessary to have distributing warehouses in the four leading cities, while only one for a much larger business is required in each of the Australian States. Distributing expenses in New Zealand average from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. higher than in Australia. In Australia farm machinery is sold on the basis of delivery on rails at the station nearest the manufacturer's or distributor's place of business; the farmer pays the outward railrage. In New Zealand the practice is to pre-pay carriage to the farmer's nearest railway station or wharf, and the cost of it, estimated at 3½ per cent., is added to the retail price. Then the equipment of some machines in New Zealand is materially different from the same machine in Australia. For instance, in Australia, drills are fitted with steel road wheels, while in New Zealand wooden road wheels, which cost more, are used.

Mr. STEWART.—If you ask for specifications for any implement with wooden wheels in Australia, it is always charged as an extra.

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes.—

Australian manufacturers charge £3 extra for wooden wheels where supplied. In New Zealand a canvas cover to protect it from the weather is supplied with each drill at a cost of about £2. No such covers are used in Australia. Owing to the difference in seasons New Zealand price lists are usually issued about six months later than in Australia, and some interested parties, when it suited their purpose, have been known to compare current Australian prices with the preceding season's prices in New Zealand. By reason of its more regular seasons, New Zealand has closely sold out its supplies yearly at prices based on the landed cost of the importations during the year, while quite the reverse has been the case in Australia, where it frequently happened that the machines sold were imported two or three years previously at lower invoice prices and with

lower freights, and as prices there were also made on the basis of landed cost, they were, for the time being, more favorable to Australian than to New Zealand purchasers.

Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member is now giving us the excuses of the International Harvester Company for selling their machines dearer in New Zealand than here.

Mr. GREGORY.—The paper I have here is from the Massey-Harris people. It gives the reason why at times there were increased prices in New Zealand as compared with here. Nobody knows better than the Minister that the prices of these goods have been jumping up considerably month after month. Manufacturing costs have been going up month after month, and year after year, until they have reached an enormous figure. Nobody knows that better than the Minister does. He knows also that machinery can be imported for one season's product, and I suppose nobody knows better than he does why the reaper and binder is being sold at its present price to-day instead of with the duty added. It has been kept very secret up to the present, but although the Minister knew it the House was not told anything of it.

Mr. GREENE.—But the beauty of the thing is that, notwithstanding these reasons in regard to New Zealand, the Australian manufacturers, who were subjected to all these extra costs, did not charge as much.

Mr. GREGORY.—Can the Minister tell us how the price of the stripper-harvester has jumped up?

Mr. GREENE.—Prices have not increased here so much.

Mr. GREGORY.—Prices have increased everywhere. The Minister knows this quite well.

Mr. GREENE.—But the Australian manufacturer did not have such large stocks in hand. He was manufacturing all the time. The honorable member's statements are pretty hot.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not think they are. I have at times questioned some of the Minister's statements. He draws his information wholly from one source—I might almost say a tainted source, because it comes from those manufacturers who expect to benefit by the increased duties.



Mr. GREENE.—One might as well say the same of the honorable member's information.

Mr. GREGORY.—Nothing of the sort. I am quoting figures that ought to have been obtained by a Board for the information of honorable members.

Mr. STEWART.—The Minister's interjection is an admission that, if the information obtained by the honorable member for Dampier is unreliable, his own figures are unreliable also.

Mr. GREENE.—I did not say they were.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister stands in an entirely different position from any other honorable member. His duty was to get the fullest possible information from every section of the community in regard to the effect of these duties, and allow honorable members to make up their own minds; although, of course, he would be entitled to throw his own weight into the balance if he so desired.

Mr. GREENE.—In Tariff matters one gets help from both sides, as the honorable member knows.

Dr. MALONEY.—Why not pass the Tariff *in globo*, so that we may deal with the dumping trouble?

Mr. GREGORY.—I cannot understand why some members opposite do not screw their courage up to the sticking point, and declare against the importation of any goods into this country. Why not increase the duties three hundredfold or five hundredfold, and test the issue at once?

Mr. GREENE.—As we did on onions?

Mr. GREGORY.—And in the case of bananas; which only shows what political pressure will do.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Did the honorable member object to what was done in connexion with bananas?

Mr. GREGORY.—Of course I did. I spoke against the proposal, and emphasized the danger of losing our trade with the Islands altogether.

But I want to give honorable members some information as to current prices for these seed and fertilizer drills in Australia and New Zealand, the comparison being between Mitchell (Australia), Reid and Gray (New Zealand), and Massey-

Harris (New Zealand and Australia). The figures are—

	Mitchell.			Reid and Gray.			Massey-Harris.					
	Australia.			New Zealand.			New Zealand.			Australia.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
13-hoe drill	67	10	0	65	16	3	66	5	0	70	0	0
15-hoe drill	72	5	0	68	5	0	70	2	6	76	0	0
17-hoe drill	78	10	0	71	3	6	74	0	0	81	12	6

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—What is the price of the Sunshine implement?

Mr. STEWART.—Mitchells and the Massey-Harris Company make the odd-numbered colters, whereas the Sunshine people do not, so it would be hard to make a comparison, as the honorable member for Wakefield suggests.

Mr. GREGORY.—The actual price of the 15-hoe drill in New Zealand is £61 17s. 6d., but the farmer pays, in addition, £2 for a canvas cover, £2 extra for wood wheels, and £2 7s. 6d. for outward railage, which bring the landed price to £68 5s. Even with the addition of these items the New Zealand farmer gets a cheaper machine than the Australian producer. I am told that the prices charged by Mitchell and the Sunshine Harvester people are approximately identical, but Mitchells have been chosen for the reason, as explained by the honorable member for Wimmera, that their drills are constructed with odd-numbered colters, as are Reid and Grays, in New Zealand, and the Massey-Harris implements, while the McKay drill is manufactured with even-numbered colters. Honorable members will note that the small New Zealand manufacturer, with an output that is trifling in comparison with that of the leading Australian manufacturers, sells his drill in Free Trade New Zealand at a price 16½ per cent. lower than the Australian manufacturer does in his highly-protected market, and lower also than the importers, whom the Australian manufacturers are attempting to exclude, can do. Current prices in the Commonwealth and the Dominion for the other items referred to by the Minister are as follow:—

	New Zealand.		Australia.
4-furrow disc plough	£58	..	£65
Spring-time harrow ..	£20	..	£21
4½-ft. mower ..	£34	..	£35 10s.



Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Was that machinery manufactured by a New Zealand firm?

Mr. GREGORY.—I am quoting the Massey Harris prices in Australia and New Zealand.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Those figures were supplied to the honorable member. The honorable member is wrong about the four-furrow disc plough. My figures are that in Australia, with a 40 per cent. duty, it is sold at £44, and in New Zealand, duty free, at £52 10s.

Mr. GREGORY.—The statistics I have used I collected for myself, except those which I quoted from Mr. Wamsley, but these figures in regard to prices are supplied by Massey-Harris, and I believe them to be true. If I doubted their accuracy, I should not put them before the Committee. I have the assurance of Massey-Harris and Company that these are their prices, and, moreover, I have checked some of them with the printed price lists issued in Canada by Deering and McCormick. I have taken all possible care to verify my information, and I would not read to the Committee any document if I thought it contained any misrepresentation. The Minister (Mr. Greene) said during this debate—

Agricultural machinery there (New Zealand), which is supplied almost entirely by overseas manufacturers—because there is practically no agricultural implement making in the Dominion—is without exception dearer than it is in Australia. . . . There are eighty-five items in this list, &c.

I propose to read a list of the retail prices for 1921 in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia of Massey-Harris farm machines of the same kind.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Where did you get that information?

Mr. GREGORY.—From Massey-Harris and Company.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Bad though our local manufacturers are because of the low wages they pay, Massey-Harris and Company are worse, because they sweat their employees under contract.

Mr. GREGORY.—I have previously quoted statistics showing that the average wage per employee in this industry is considerably greater in Canada than in Australia, whilst the output also is larger. If a machine manufactured in Canada can be sold for £60 while the one manufactured here is sold for £100, there must be something wrong with the local manufacture.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The Massey-Harris crowd here sweat their employees.

Mr. GREGORY.—The comparison of wages per head is wholly in favour of Canada.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Has the honorable member worked out the percentage difference between Canadian and Australian wages?

Mr. FLEMING.—Wages in Canada were about 25 per cent. higher two years ago.

Mr. GREGORY.—The wages I quoted related to 1918.

Mr. MATHEWS.—What is the good of quoting those?

Mr. GREGORY.—The average income of salaried employees in this industry in Australia is £170 2s., and in Canada £292 10s., whilst the average wage of the operatives in Australia is £129 18s., and in Canada £192 12s. I shall quote the prices paid for different articles of machinery by the farmers in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The Australian prices of binders are quoted on the basis of a 10 per cent. duty, because Massey-Harris & Company had a large number of machines on hand just before the new duty became operative. Had that machinery arrived a month later, and borne the 45 per cent. duty, the increase would have had to be paid by the consumer.

Mr. GREENE.—Can the honorable member say why the Massey-Harris people knocked off £24 off their catalogue price for the reaper and binder?

Mr. GREGORY.—I can. While I was speaking on the first item, the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) interjected:—"The price quoted here for the imported reaper and binder was £130, but as soon as Mr. McKay quoted £100 for his machine, the price of the imported article dropped." The explanation is this: The Australian retail price for a Massey-Harris 6-foot reaper and binder for the 1920 harvest was £102 payable after harvest. As forward orders for harvesting machines are booked all through the year, it became necessary to fix a price for binders for the 1921 harvest soon after the new Tariff was brought down, and a price list was issued on 19th July, 1920, in which the price for the 6-foot reaper and binder was fixed at £130, which included the duty of 45 per cent. under the new Tariff. Honorable members are aware that in March of last year the new Tariff was introduced, which



imposed a duty of 45 per cent. on reapers and binders, but it did not become operative until the 1st January of this year. However, a large number of reapers and binders arrived in December too late for delivery for the 1920 harvest, before the new duty came into effect, but after the High Court decision was announced under which the Customs Department charged duty on the exchange. It is those reapers and binders, carried over from 1920, that are now listed at £105 for the 1921 harvest. Had they paid the new 45 per cent. duty and the duty on exchange, their price would not have been less than £135. The price established by McKay had nothing whatever to do with the question.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The only trouble is that they did not quote the lower price until McKay quoted £100.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member knows perfectly well that, up to that time, the Sunshine Works had turned out only one machine.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am speaking of quotations which I know were made by McKay for this season in South Australia.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Massey-Harris people distinctly intimated that, as soon as they would be called upon to pay the higher duty, the price would be increased to £132.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Yes; but it fell to £100 when the Sunshine machine came out.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Massey-Harris people state that their price at the present time is based on the 10 per cent. duties paid by them on these machines.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—No; it is based on their competitor's price here.

Mr. GREGORY.—I cannot credit that statement. I know the price of everything has been increased, and may still increase, but I have with me a list comparing the various prices charged to the farmers on the usual terms, cash payable after harvest, for agricultural machinery in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. It is as follows:—

PRICES OF FARM MACHINERY, AUSTRALIA,  
NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA.

—	Canada.	New Zealand.	Australia.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Reaper and Binder, 5 ft. cut	60 0 0	95 0 0	103 0 0

Mr. MATHEWS.—Does it cost the Massey-Harris Company £35 to send a reaper and binder to New Zealand?

Mr. GREGORY.—There are very many handling charges. As I shall show the honorable member presently, the natural protection afforded varies from 20 to 50 per cent. This comparative list of prices continues—

PRICES OF FARM MACHINERY, AUSTRALIA,  
NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA.

—	Canada.	New Zealand.	Australia.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Reaper and Binder—			
6 ft. cut .. ..	61 0 0	97 0 0	105 0 0
8-ft. cut .. ..	65 10 0	115 0 0	125 0 0
Side Delivery Reaper ..	30 0 0	55 0 0	62 10 0
Mower—			
3½-ft. cut .. ..	20 10 0	28 0 0	29 10 0
4½-ft. cut .. ..	23 0 0	34 0 0	35 10 0
5-ft. cut .. ..	24 0 0	38 0 0	39 10 0
5½-ft. cut .. ..	24 10 0	39 0 0	40 10 0
6-ft. cut .. ..	25 10 0	40 0 0	42 0 0
Hay Rake—			
8-ft. .. ..	11 10 0	18 10 0	20 0 0
9-ft. .. ..	12 10 0	19 10 0	21 0 0
Side Delivery Rake ..	31 10 0	42 0 0	44 0 0
Grain and Fertilizer Drill—			
9 hoe .. ..	Not used	60 0 0	63 0 0
11 hoe .. ..	39 10 0	64 0 0	68 0 0
13 hoe .. ..	42 0 0	68 0 0	74 0 0

I hope that the Minister does not object to my putting in *Hansard* the whole of this list.

Mr. GREENE.—I did not put the whole of mine in, but please yourself.

Mr. GABB.—Are not the Canadian prices an argument in favour of establishing the industry in our own country?

Mr. GREGORY.—The industry is already established here, and has made marvellous progress under the lower duties.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I am afraid that the honorable member for Dampier is quoting the wholesale prices for Canada.

Mr. GREGORY.—No; these are the prices the farmers pay in cash, after harvest. The honorable member can compare his figures with mine. The list continues—

PRICES OF FARM MACHINERY, AUSTRALIA,  
NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA.

—	Canada.	New Zealand.	Australia.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Grain and Fertilizer Drill—			
15 hoe .. ..	Not used	72 0 0	80 0 0
17 hoe .. ..	Not used	76 0 0	86 0 0
9 disc .. ..	Not used	63 0 0	67 0 0
11 disc .. ..	42 0 0	68 0 0	72 0 0
13 disc .. ..	45 10 0	73 0 0	78 0 0
15 disc .. ..	Not used	77 0 0	84 0 0
17 disc .. ..	Not used	82 0 0	90 0 0



Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—May not the difference between the Australian and New Zealand prices be accounted for by the difference in freights?

Mr. GREGORY.—There is no duty in New Zealand, but it costs the seller more to get the Canadian goods to the New Zealand farmer than it does to land them at the vending point in Australia. The list continues—

PRICES OF FARM MACHINERY, AUSTRALIA,  
NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA.

—	Canada.	New Zealand.	Australia.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Spring Tooth Cultivator—			
9 tine .. .. .	13 0 0	20 0 0	22 10 0
6 ft. .. .. .	19 0 0	29 10 0	33 0 0
8 ft. .. .. .	22 0 0	34 10 0	39 0 0
10 ft. .. .. .	30 0 0	45 0 0	50 0 0
Maize Cultivator, No. 8 .. .. .	24 10 0	32 0 0	37 0 0
Maize Drill, Single .. .. .	Not used	8 10 0	10 0 0
Disc Harrow, 14 x 16 .. .. .	12 10 0	19 0 0	22 0 0
Disc Harrow, Reversible, 12 x 16 .. .. .	Not used	20 0 0	23 0 0
Disc Harrow, No. 5—			
10 disc .. .. .	Not used	28 0 0	32 0 0
12 disc .. .. .	Not used	30 0 0	34 0 0
14 disc .. .. .	Not used	32 0 0	36 0 0
16 disc .. .. .	Not used	34 0 0	38 10 0
18 disc .. .. .	Not used	36 0 0	41 0 0
20 disc .. .. .	Not used	38 0 0	43 10 0
Diamond Smoothing Harrow—			
2 section .. .. .	4 0 0	5 17 6	6 5 0
3 section .. .. .	6 0 0	8 15 0	9 5 0
4 section .. .. .	8 0 0	11 17 6	12 12 6
5 section .. .. .	10 0 0	14 15 0	15 12 6
6 section .. .. .	12 0 0	18 0 0	19 2 6
Lever Harrow—			
1 section .. .. .	4 0 0	5 15 0	6 0 0
2 section .. .. .	7 10 0	11 5 0	11 12 6
3 section .. .. .	11 0 0	16 12 6	17 2 6
4 section .. .. .	Not used	22 15 0	23 7 6
Spring Tooth Harrow, 10-tooth .. .. .	6 0 0	8 5 0	8 12 6
Riding Spring Tooth Harrow .. .. .	Not used	20 0 0	21 0 0
Single Garden Plow—			
No. 43 .. .. .	Not used	5 2 6	6 10 0
No. 44 .. .. .	Not used	7 7 6	9 0 0
Single Field Plow—			
No. 15 .. .. .	5 0 0	6 17 6	8 5 0
No. 10 .. .. .	6 0 0	8 17 6	10 5 0
No. 3 .. .. .	6 0 0	8 17 6	10 5 0
Drill Plow .. .. .	7 10 0	12 0 0	15 0 0
Sidchill Plow .. .. .	6 0 0	9 0 0	11 5 0
Single Furrow Plows, N.M.—			
8in. .. .. .	Not used	8 2 6	10 5 0
10in. .. .. .	Not used	8 17 6	11 0 0
12in. .. .. .	Not used	9 7 6	11 15 0
14in. .. .. .	Not used	9 17 6	12 10 0
16in. .. .. .	Not used	10 17 6	13 15 0
Light 2-Furrow Gang Plow .. .. .	11 0 0	20 0 0	21 0 0
Light 3-Furrow Gang Plow .. .. .	Not used	32 0 0	40 0 0
Light 4-Furrow Gang Plow .. .. .	Not used	36 0 0	45 0 0
Disc Plow—			
Single Furrow .. .. .	23 0 0	32 0 0	34 5 0
2-Furrow .. .. .	28 10 0	41 0 0	43 0 0

Mr. MATHEWS.—There is juggling somewhere.

Mr. GREGORY.—Before the honorable member speaks, I shall take the op-

portunity of comparing my list with his. The list continues—

PRICES OF FARM MACHINERY, AUSTRALIA,  
NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA.

—	Canada.	New Zealand.	Australia
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Disc Plow—			
3-Furrow .. .. .	Not used	51 0 0	57 0 0
4-Furrow .. .. .	Not used	58 0 0	65 0 0
5-Furrow .. .. .	Not used	65 0 0	73 0 0
Root Pulper .. .. .	6 0 0	11 0 0	13 0 0
Sub-Surface Packer .. .. .	23 0 0	40 0 0	48 0 0
Wheelbarrow .. .. .	2 0 0	3 5 0	3 5 0
Garden Scuffler—			
No. 2 .. .. .	3 10 0	5 5 0	5 15 0
No. 10 .. .. .	3 5 0	5 0 0	5 7 6
No. 14 .. .. .	5 10 0	8 10 0	9 0 0
Cream Separator—			
400-lb. size .. .. .	20 0 0	23 0 0	29 5 0
500-lb. size .. .. .	22 0 0	27 0 0	34 5 0

Cream separators cost £20 in Canada, £23 in New Zealand, and £29 5s. in Australia. No doubt the bigger duty here accounts for the difference in price. The list from which I have read shows that our farmers pay on the average 60 per cent. more for the machinery and implements they use than is paid by the Canadian farmer, and that in every instance the New Zealand prices for agricultural machinery and the like are lower than the Australian prices. The Minister has laughed at my statement about the value to our manufacturers of the natural protection which they enjoy. In regard to wire, there is a natural protection of £3 per ton in freight, exchange, and insurance charges, and in the long list from which I have quoted there is scarcely an item in regard to which the natural protection is not over 30 per cent., and in some cases it amounts to nearly 75 per cent. The Massey-Harris Company has supplied me with figures showing the actual cost of importing a 4½-feet mower, which was landed in Melbourne last December from the steam-ship *Virgilia*, and a cultivator, which was landed here on the 30th March last from the steam-ship



*Port Hacking.* These are the figures giving the cost of importing the mower:—

INVOICE COST (\$66), £13 11s. 3d.

			Percentage of Importing Charges to Invoice Value.
	£	s. d.	
Packing and casing ..	1	2 7	8.34
Inland freight in America ..	0	17 1	6.30
Marine insurance ..	0	1 10	.68
Exchange at 15 per cent. on £15 12s. 9d. f.o.b. ..	2	6 11	17.30
Ocean freight to Melbourne..	2	3 11	16.18
Wharfage, stacking, cartage, and receiving, &c. ..	0	8 2	3.01
Setting up, preparing for delivery, &c. ..	1	5 0	9.21
	8	5 6	61.02

A duty of 10 per cent., which was formerly the rate, would have amounted to £1 10s. 2d. on par value, or to £1 17s. 9d. on commercial exchange value.

MR. GREENE.—These machines are imported in the flat—that is, unassembled, and the cost of assembling them here should not have been included in that statement, because it is not part of the cost of importing. All machines have to be assembled, either at the factory or at the place to which they are exported.

MR. GREGORY.—I assume that this machine would originally be assembled in the factory; but, perhaps, the Minister is right. On the figures I have given, the duty at 45 per cent. on commercial exchange value comes to £8 9s. 9d., or 62.59 per cent. on the invoice value. Deducting the cost of assembling here—£1 5s.—the duty would be between 40 and 50 per cent. on the invoice value. I have similar figures regarding the cost of importing a cultivator, but I shall not read them. In 1918, about 70 out of 110 countries mentioned in a list I have consulted allowed agricultural machinery to be imported free of duty. The United States of America was one of those countries. There, everything in the nature of agricultural machinery, or implements, or parts, is admitted duty free.

MR. GABB.—Has that always been so?

MR. GREGORY.—No; but when the last Tariff was passed these things were placed on the free list.

MR. GABB. — Because the manufacturers of the United States of America are well established.

MR. GREGORY. — The reason may have been to obtain reciprocity of treatment with Canada, in the hope of capturing the markets of the far western portion of the Dominion. The farmers and others in the western parts of Canada are agitating for Tariff reform so that they may buy their requirements at something like the world's prices, and yet the duties which they have to pay are nothing like those which the Australian farmer has to pay. A huge political organization is being formed in western Canada for the protection of the interests of the farmers, who have to compete with other countries in the markets of the world.

SIR GRANVILLE RYRIE.—Does not Canada manufacture agricultural machinery?

MR. GREGORY.—The Canadian manufacturers of agricultural machinery are the chief competitors of our own manufacturers.

MR. RILEY.—Then the Canadian farmer should get his agricultural machinery cheaply.

MR. GREGORY.—He buys for £60 what our farmer pays £102 for, and yet he complains. This Tariff will generate a feeling of hostility in Australia, because it penalizes the man on the land. We are trying to induce our population to settle on the land, and at enormous expense are bringing immigrants from the Old Country, and yet we are charging them enormously high prices for everything they need. Our farmers have to accept the world's prices for their products, and their trials and troubles have been many and severe.

MR. MATHEWS.—At the present time, fowls' food costs 10s. 3d. a bushel.

MR. GREGORY.—The present price of wheat is due to an arrangement made by the State Governments; but will any one say that it compensates the New South Wales farmers for the recent two years of drought in which they made nothing? We ask that these items be reconsidered. Should the agricultural machinery industry need assistance, let it be given by way of a bounty. Our manufacturing industries, however, made greater progress under low duties than



they have made since many of the rates were increased by the 1914 Tariff. The present Tariff will injure the producer, and I do not think it will benefit the workers, although it plays into the hands of Trusts and monopolies, and tends to increase their number. Honorable members know how the promises that were made when machinery duties were increased in 1908 have been broken. The farmer does not know from day to day what return his industry will yield him. He has to compete without protection in the markets of the world, and he deserves special consideration. Land has been falling out of cultivation, and though the area that is being cultivated has increased this year, that is due chiefly to the efforts of repatriated men to make homes for themselves. The man who goes out into the bush to win a livelihood by tilling land that has hitherto produced nothing, and cuts himself off from the advantages of civilization, often being unable to get schooling for his children or a proper mail service, is surely worthy of consideration. Yet, these duties fall wholly upon such men and other tillers of the soil.

**Mr. MATHEWS** (Melbourne Ports) [5.4].—I recognise that the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), although ill-advised, has made out a good case from his own stand-point. We who support the duties have been told that we are trying to ruin the agriculturist.

**Mr. STEWART.**—Not that you are trying to do so, but that that will be the effect of the duties.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—That will not be their effect, and were it likely to be so not one honorable member on this side would support them; because if the man on the land cannot make a living, the rest of the community suffers. We quite understand that; but we believe that the farmers' representatives in this Chamber are over-estimating the effect of the increased duty. We are charged with looking solely after the interests of the manufacturer, but we would rather do that than protect the importer. The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has referred to the Massey-Harris Company. I have a particular objection to that firm, because I believe it is worse than the International Harvester Company. In connexion with the assembling of these im-

plements, the workmen are in a somewhat unfortunate position, as there is not a Federal award covering this particular trade. Victoria and South Australia are the principal manufacturing States, and operations are governed by the decisions of a Victorian Wages Board. Unfortunately, a mistake was made in preparing the Victorian rates and conditions, and the Massey-Harris Company and the International Harvester Company are taking full advantage of the position. The representatives of the men had it arranged that these firms could not under-pay men, but under certain contract arrangements men are engaged in assembling the parts of agricultural implements at rates which do not allow them to earn a living wage. These firms, however, are controlled, to a certain extent, and we can demand from them wages and conditions which we cannot exact from importers.

**Mr. STEWART.**—Is it not rather strange that men can be secured to work for less than a living wage?

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—It is; and at times the firms find great difficulty in obtaining their services. At present there is a good deal of unemployment, and these firms are taking full advantage of the situation by employing men to work at wages below those usually paid. Agricultural implements can be assembled by men who do not possess engineering skill, although a certain amount of mechanical knowledge is necessary. In many countries where there is over-production, the manufacturer is compelled to export his surplus to other countries, where it is sold at a lower price than it is disposed of to the consumers in the country where it is manufactured. It is only six weeks ago that the South African farmers objected to Victorian wheat being dumped in that country, because it was detrimental to the interests of the South African producers. Australian wheat has been sold in South Africa at a lower rate than it was disposed of in the Commonwealth. The American manufacturers are not the only transgressors in this direction, because all manufacturers dispose of their over-production in a way that is detrimental to the interests of those in the countries from which they export. The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) quoted the ruling prices in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, but Canada is really the same as



the United States of America, because the same firms are operating in the two countries, and the Tariff in the two countries is framed to suit the interests of both. The difference in the Canadian price of £61 and the New Zealand price of £97 is accounted for by extra profit, because in New Zealand there is no competition with the local manufacturer. If the New Zealand price is £97 and the Australian £102, the difference of £5 does not mean ruination to the Australian farmer. Surely the average agriculturist would be prepared to pay that amount if it would mean placing the industry on a sound basis and making the farmer independent of foreign manufacturers. I doubt very much whether, individually or collectively, the Australian wheat-growers would enter any protest if they realized that the imposition of the proposed duty would eventually be the means of placing them in a better position. I quite understand that the farmers' representatives are advocating reductions because they fear that some injury will be inflicted, and if they do not protest they may have to explain. I believe that some farmers' representatives are asked to make statements with which they do not agree. How much would it mean per bushel of wheat, oats, or barley if the extra price was paid?

Mr. STEWART.—Will the honorable member encourage primary production by giving a price above the world's parity?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I do not like being nasty, but 10s. 3d. per bushel for fowls' food is ridiculous. I have been informed by poultry farmers that it is impossible to carry on because farmers want so much for their wheat.

Mr. STEWART.—The farmers are not receiving anything like that price.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I know that, but they are receiving on an average 9s. 4½d. per bushel.

Mr. STEWART.—I do not think there is one who has received 9s. a bushel.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I know that certain charges have to be incurred, but I have been assured that they receive over 9s. 3d.

Mr. STEWART.—The farmers do not receive more than 8s.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Then some middlemen must be making the profit.

Mr. STEWART.—The honorable member must not overlook the railway charges and the wages paid to wharf-lumpers.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I know what rates they are paid, but they are not to be compared with the profits made by the middlemen.

Mr. STEWART.—They are getting some of it.

Mr. MATHEWS.—We are quite agreeable to the farmer receiving a fair price, because we believe that he has to work.

Mr. STEWART.—He is the worker.

Mr. MATHEWS.—He does not work harder than the operative in any other industry.

Mr. STEWART.—He works longer hours.

Mr. MATHEWS.—No farmer works harder than the gas stokers in my electorate.

Mr. BOWDEN.—I doubt that.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The work of a gas-stoker is very strenuous.

Mr. GREENE.—I do not think the honorable member is right in saying that the farmer does not work hard.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is not my statement. I said he did not work harder than the stokers in the gas works.

Mr. GREENE.—I will not admit that.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If a farmer were asked to do the work of a gas-stoker he would run away.

Mr. FLEMING.—And the honorable member would not get the stokers of the gas works to work as farmers do.

Mr. MATHEWS.—A number of men in my electorate are anxious to go on the land. I know of a farmers' representative in this Chamber who did not possess much training, and who made a success of rural work. There is nothing in farming that cannot be successfully mastered by a man possessing ordinary intelligence and physical fitness.

Mr. FOLEY.—The best farmers in Western Australia were originally miners.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Quite so. A number of old Cornish miners have made very successful agriculturists. The honorable member for Wimmera (Mr. Stewart) must admit that a number of farmers have been so successful that they have been able to retire.

Mr. STEWART.—Yes, and a number have been through the Insolvency Courts.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is so. It is ridiculous to suggest that the imposition of the proposed duty will ruin the farmers.

Mr. GREGORY.—It may not ruin them, but it may drive them off the land,



Mr. MATHEWS.—The extra duty represents about one-seventh of a penny per bushel, and if that is going to ruin the farmer he is hanging on by a very slender thread. The Australian farmer owes a good deal to the implement manufacturers of Australia, because the stripper harvester, which is an Australian invention, was largely responsible for making wheat farming successful.

Mr. STEWART.—Was not the chief inventor an agriculturist?

Mr. MATHEWS.—Inventors would be of little use without manufacturers. Quite apart from sentiment, it is good business for the man on the land to encourage the local manufacture of the implements he requires.

Mr. GREGORY.—But will the honorable member say that high duties are essential, either to the manufacturer or to the worker?

Mr. MATHEWS.—If I did not think so I would not support them. If I thought that, without imposing higher rates of duties, I could make Australian employers pay, and continue to pay, the wages which their workmen earn, I would be satisfied not to go for increases.

Mr. STEWART.—The honorable member knows that if the local manufacturer had to pay higher wages he would raise the price of his machines.

Mr. MATHEWS.—At any rate, he would not do so because of any lack of effort on my part to prevent that course. The experience which we had in Australia with the stripper-harvester very nearly killed Australia's Protectionist policy. I do not want to open old sores, but if our manufacturers had kept their promises, the Protective policy would have been much more easy of adoption than it has proved.

Mr. GREGORY.—It could not have been much more easily operated than at present.

Mr. MATHEWS.—But for the breach of faith which occurred in 1908, the duty on every machine would have amounted to £16.

Mr. GREGORY.—Under the duty which was imposed, did not Australian manufacturers do remarkably well?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I believe they did.

Mr. GREGORY.—And did they not hold their own?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I do not know. They were not paying the wages that they should have paid in a country like Australia, and we desired increased duty to enable them to do so. If such increase had been injurious to the farmer, we would not have sought to impose it. But we knew, and we still know, that it was not injurious. We know, further, that without the imposition of additional duties the prices of imported machinery have gone up and up. The establishment of local factories tends, without doubt, to check importers. That has been proved in New Zealand. The figures which the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) quoted in this respect were not accurate. I say that the machines are cheaper in Victoria, at any rate, than in New Zealand. But even the statistics which the honorable member gave proved that the importer is an exploiter. Unfortunately, he is often an individual whom we cannot get at, since the profits go elsewhere. I wish to quote some interesting figures for the particular benefit of country members. In the financial year 1905-6, the 5-ft. stripper-harvester cost the farmer £81. In 1909-10, the price was £70. The 6-ft. stripper-harvester in the earlier year was £94, and in the later period £78. I could quote similar comparisons in respect of other lines of machinery, but my purpose is to show that after the imposition of a Protective Tariff there was a decrease in the price which the Australian farmer had to pay.

Mr. GREGORY.—Whose figures are those?

Mr. MATHEWS.—They have been furnished for me by the trade. I have made the comparisons to show that, not only was the price to the Australian farmer reduced, but that the importer had to take less profit.

Mr. HAY.—Was there any local competition during those periods to account for the reduction in prices?

Mr. MATHEWS.—There was in those days. I am told that there is very little to-day. It will astonish honorable members in the corner to learn that, over a five-year period, up to 1918, the duty which the farmer had to pay upon his imported implements amounted to about one-seventh of 1d. per bushel on all the

grain produced in the Commonwealth. Such an imposition could not possibly ruin anybody. The amount of duty collected on agricultural implements of all sorts last year was about £450,000 per annum. The farmer says that that is a direct charge upon one class, namely, the primary producer. It is not so, for the reason that the primary producer passes it on. Honorable members will be interested, I think, in the following extract from the *Farm Implement News*, published in Chicago:—

During the month of February, agricultural implements to the value of \$7,082,800 were exported, according to figures made public by the Department of Commerce last week. This is a large increase over February, 1920, when the value of implement exports was \$2,869,647. For the first eight months of the current fiscal year, implement exports were \$37,272,683, compared with \$19,552,593 during the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year.

The annual report of the International Harvester Company, made public 14th April, shows that, while the company's volume of business in 1920 was the largest in its history, the net profit was smaller than in 1919.

The report states that the machine selling prices in 1920 showed an average increase of 60 per cent. over pre-war prices, and that the increase in repair prices was 40 per cent.

The peculiar and significant fact is that while their exports were enormously greater than during the earlier period, their profits were considerably less. It is obvious that American manufacturers were accepting lower prices for their machinery. That is what we fear in Australia. I agree with the honorable member for Dampier that, with the up-to-date furnishings of our factories, and with the intelligence and individuality of the Australian workman, we ought to be able to compete and hold our own with any one in the world. So long as the conditions are fair and normal, we should fear nothing and nobody. But we have to look out for the profit-cutting foreign manufacturer. United States of America manufacturers have had to sell their products for less than formerly, and they will be compelled to continue to do so. They must find and keep and endeavour to expand oversea trade, and they can only do so by selling for less profits than they were formerly making. Acute though the general position may be in Australia and Great Britain to-day, there are also great troubles and disabilities in

the United States of America. In their search for, and exploitation of, further markets, the American makers will resort to methods which, if they are not counteracted here, will prove considerably detrimental to Australian industry. It is "up to us," and particularly to the representatives of the farmers, to see that Australia's industrial interests are conserved and protected. Does not the farmer perceive that an industrial smash would injure him as much as any other individual in the community?

Mr. STEWART.—We do not want any smashes in this country.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Then I ask the honorable member to assist in preventing calamity. There need be only the small beginnings of a slide to precipitate an awful avalanche. While we are all desirous of reducing the prices of commodities generally, if reductions are to be brought about by the enforcement of lower wages, there is bound to be disaster. That consideration appeals to me as a representative of the worker more than it does to honorable members opposite. In 1893, there was a smash in Victoria, and, in common with many thousands of other persons, I had to leave this State and go elsewhere to make a living. Will honorable members opposite tell me that the farmers did not suffer then, as well as anybody else in the community?

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member is assisting to bring about a similar condition of things by injuring the producing interests of the country.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If the effect of this duty were to injure the interests of the producers of the country I should have nothing to do with it. I believe that it cannot possibly have that effect.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The conditions in 1893 were as different from those existing now as daylight is from dark. We are suffering now from double and treble the prices that prevailed in 1893.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If the honorable member remembers the crisis of 1893 he will know that we were then suffering from inflated values, which, in proportion to the value of money, were as great as the increase in prices to-day.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—But the cost of living in 1893 was down to bedrock as compared with the cost to-day.



Mr. MATHEWS. — I notice that in Brisbane recently Mr. Andrew Fisher expressed the opinion that even the great financiers of the world do not know where they are to-day. There is no one who really knows what is the true financial position in the world to-day. All the great financiers have been at sea. Our position to-day is peculiar just as it was in 1893 when the smash came. If it had not been for the discovery of gold in Western Australia at that time many people in Victoria would have had to starve. The State Government at the time were mad, and went in for economy.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Atkinson).—Does the honorable member intend to connect these remarks with the item before the Chair?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I can do so. I am replying to the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), who says that these duties will ruin the farming section of the community. I am pointing out that there are other things besides the increase of duties which might ruin the farmers. A financial smash in Australia would effectually ruin them. I have to look to the past for an example of this, and I say now to honorable members representing farming interests that the lowering of wages will bring about a financial smash in Australia more quickly than anything else. Unless we have duties to protect our manufactures against dumping from other countries we shall be likely to have such a smash.

Mr. STEWART.—Would the smash come if, with a reduction of these duties, we had a corresponding reduction in the cost of living? Why should not wages come down as well as prices?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I would rather live in a country where prices and wages were high than in one in which wages and prices were low.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—In other words, the honorable member would be satisfied with an effective wage value.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Exactly. I shall take no risks in bringing wages down until I know that the cost of living has been brought down. My duty is to consider the position of the worker.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Wages have not yet caught up with the cost of living.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is so, and the Basic Wage Commission proved it. I

fear the possibility of a crash. I do not wish to use platitudes, but we all know that no nation can build up a desirable civilization on agricultural production alone. There must be stable manufacturing industries to make the country what we should desire it to be, and no country can be independent without them.

Mr. STEWART.—We all agree with that.

Mr. GREGORY.—My amendment provides for fair duties on these manufactured articles.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I should not like to suggest that the honorable member is not sincere in his proposal; but, as a matter of fact, I desire that the duty should be increased by the amount by which he is trying to reduce it, because I know from past experience what the Yankee firms will go for, and must go for. Australia will be one of the first of the markets which they will try to exploit. The honorable member for Dampier quoted certain figures in order to compare prices in Australia and New Zealand. I have already said that, even if the honorable member's figures are correct, I have so good an opinion of farmers in Australia that I believe they would be willing to pay the increased prices charged in Australia in order to have these industries established in this country.

Mr. GREGORY.—Can the honorable member show me that the agricultural implement industry did not flourish in Australia under the low duties of the 1908-1911 Tariff?

Mr. MATHEWS.—What I say is that if a £12 duty was essential in 1908, £16 is useless now.

Mr. GREGORY.—No; because this is quite a new machine.

Mr. MATHEWS.—It is useless to base estimates on pre-war values. Things are at present in a state of flux. We do not know where we are. Experiments are dangerous, and experiments in the lowering of wages are, in my view, more dangerous than any others. In the circumstances, to give opportunity to importing firms to exploit our people is foolish on the part of members of this Committee. I have some figures here which institute a comparison between prices in Australia and prices in New Zealand. I take, for

instance, certain manufactures of the International Harvester Company, and I find that this company sells the Mogul stationary engine, 1 horse-power, for £26 in Australia, where the duty is 30 per cent. In New Zealand, where the duty on the machine is only 10 per cent., they charge £35, or £9 more than they charge for it in Australia. For the Mogul stationary engine, 6 horse-power, the International Harvester Company charges £125 in Australia, where the duty is 30 per cent.; and in New Zealand, where the duty is only 10 per cent., they charge £146 10s.

Mr. GREGORY.—Is this an oil engine?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I cannot say. For the Mogul stationary engine, 10 horse-power, the International Harvester Company charges £190 in Australia, where the duty is 30 per cent., and £209 10s. in New Zealand, where the duty is only 10 per cent. These figures show that the importing firms sell more cheaply in a protective country than in a practically Free Trade country. The reason is apparent, and it is that they have to compete here with local manufacturers.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member's figures are extraordinary, because the figures I had showed that American oil engines increased in price less during the war than almost any other article I know of.

Mr. MATHEWS.—My figures will be placed on record, and if the honorable member can refute them he will have an opportunity to do so. For a fifteen-hoe grain and fertilizer drill the International Harvester Company charge here, where the duty is 30 per cent., £51 5s., and they charge £53 5s. in New Zealand, where the implement is admitted free.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think the honorable member's figures are wrong.

Mr. MATHEWS.—They have been collected for me, and if the honorable member can refute them, so much the better for his case. The International Harvester Company charge, in Australia, where the duty is 25 per cent., £16 5s. for an orchard disc harrow, 8 x 16, with fore-carriage, and they charge £17 10s. for this implement in New Zealand, where it is admitted free. For a Diamond harrow, four sections, they charge £7 15s. in Australia, where the duty is 25 per cent., and £7 13s. 6d. in New Zealand, where the implement is admitted free. The Massey-Harris Com-

pany sell a fifteen-hoe grain and fertilizer drill in Australia, where the duty is 30 per cent., for £51 12s., and they charge in New Zealand £53 7s. 6d., though the implement is admitted free to that Dominion. They sell a fifteen-disc grain and fertilizer drill for £55 12s. 6d. in Australia, where the duty is 30 per cent., and in New Zealand, where the implement is admitted free, they charge £57 10s. for it. They sell a disc harrow, twelve discs, 6 feet, in Australia, for £13 15s., though the duty on the implement is 25 per cent. here, and they charge £12 17s. 6d. for it in New Zealand, where it is admitted free. They sell a Diamond harrow, four sections, in Australia, where the duty is 25 per cent., for £7 12s. 6d., and for £7 12s. 6d. in New Zealand, where it is admitted free. For a disc plough, three furrows, 24-inch disc, they charge £35 7s. 6d. in Australia, with a duty of 25 per cent., and they charge £35 12s. 6d. for it in New Zealand, where it is admitted free. For a gang plough, two-furrow rolling coulters, they charge £15 12s. 6d. in Australia, where the duty is 25 per cent., and £15 14s. 6d. in New Zealand, where the implement is admitted free. I quote these figures to show that importers take advantage of the state of the market, and where there is no local competition they charge all they can get. The funny thing is that the farmers' representatives regard them as most merciful people, and appear to consider that they are philanthropists.

Mr. GREGORY.—No. We say that our local agricultural implement industry has been built up under a low Tariff, and now the honorable member desires to make a special concession to the men who manufacture these implements.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The only concession I wish to make them is to enable them to hold the Australian market while paying **fair wages to the men they employ** and charging fair prices to those who have to use the implements they manufacture. Honorable members opposite know that if I get a chance I shall make the manufacturers sell at fair prices.

Mr. STEWART.—I am interested to know what is going to happen after this Tariff is passed.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member is not more interested in that than I am. The figures I have quoted represent in every instance net cash prices.



The statement regarding this matter which has been supplied to me reads:—

In New Zealand, oil engines are subject to a revenue duty of 10 per cent., but all other lines are admitted free. In Australia, there were duties of 30 per cent. on grain drills and oil engines, and 25 per cent. upon all other lines mentioned above. Notwithstanding this, it will be seen that prices in Australia were considerably lower than prices in New Zealand. That was in 1918-19. In 1920, the difference was even greater. Writing to the *Argus* of 18th April last, the Minister for Trade and Customs quoted the International Harvester Company's then current prices in the two countries, as under:—

—	Australia. Net Cash.	New Zealand. Net Cash.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	Duty 25 %	Duty Free.
4-Furrow Disc Plough, 24-in. discs	44 12 6	52 10 0
Spring Tine Harrow, 23-teeth	17 10 0	19 10 0
	Duty 30 %	
Eleven Disc Drill	51 10 0	62 0 0
Thirteen Disc Drill	55 5 0	66 15 0

These figures show that Protection on farm machinery does not raise prices, and that the New Zealand farmer derives no advantage from the free importation of his implements. Whilst the removal of duties is no advantage to New Zealand, it has serious disadvantages. The Dominion loses considerable revenue, which has to be made good by some other form of taxation, and the farmer is charged more for his implements.

May I add that the Minister is not encouraging the production in his own country of a commodity which ought to be encouraged? That, to my mind, is the greatest crime of the lot. In New Zealand the duty was remitted, with the object of making these machines cheaper to the farmer, but the result was that they were made dearer. I know that all business men will cut lines at times, just to show how much cheaper they can sell than can the fellow next door.

Mr. GREGORY.—When I quote statistics, the honorable member complains if I go back to 1918.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I have quoted the figures for 1919-20.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member has not quoted the present prices of these machines.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Let us get down to the question of wages. As honorable members are aware, that is the question which most appeals to me. During the war, the manufacturers of Canada, by reason of their proximity to the markets

of Europe, were able to obtain contracts to the value of hundreds of millions sterling, whilst we in Australia were unable to secure any such contracts.

Mr. GREGORY.—Contracts for the supply of agricultural implements?

Mr. MATHEWS.—No; unfortunately, they were for war commodities. As the honorable member knows, all the industrial establishments in Canada were converted into war-material establishments. Now that the war is over, these have reverted to ordinary manufacturing purposes. The wages paid during the war in Canada, because of the inordinate prices which manufacturers were able to obtain for their commodities, were higher than those paid in Australia. But since the armistice the manufacturers there have discovered a most effective method of lowering wages. I hope not merely to maintain the wages which are being paid to the agricultural employees in Australia, but to secure an increase of those wages. At the same time, I say that the employer in Canada is not paying his employees the wages that he should. Figures prove nothing unless they are up to date.

Mr. STEWART.—Figures prove everything, according to the statements of some honorable members this afternoon.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The statements which I have quoted can be disproved only by comparison with the selling prices extant. We have been told that the manufacturers of Canada are paying considerably higher wages to their employees than are the manufacturers of Australia. I hope that they are. But if they are doing so, the fact only makes me anxious to see our own employees receiving a considerably higher wage. Should there be over-production, either in Canada or the United States of America, the manufacturing firms there will not exhibit any mercy or any consideration to the manufacturers of Australia. Thus, whilst it may happen that agricultural machinery may be imported at prices which for a time will suit the farming community, the latter should beware of what is in front of it if dumping should take place here.

Mr. GREGORY.—It is preposterous to talk about dumping.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I take it that the honorable member for Dampier does not desire to see that state of things brought about. But he knows that methods are adopted in business—methods which are not conducive to the best interests of the community.

Mr. GREGORY.—I would like to see a body established, such as has been created by the Japanese. When goods are imported into that country and are offered at unreasonably low prices, the whole thing is sifted from top to bottom with a view to seeing that the people pay fair prices for them.

Mr. MATHEWS.—We have been promised that similar legislation will be enacted here.

Mr. GREENE.—That Japanese arrangement is in addition to the ordinary duty.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I hope that the members of the Corner party will not slip when we upon this side of the chamber endeavour to get similar legislation enacted. We require anti-dumping laws.

Mr. STEWART.—I hope that we shall be as solidly behind the honorable member as he is solidly behind the Government in connexion with this Tariff.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I hope so. Upon page 7815 of *Hansard* of this session, the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), in discussing the duty upon stripper-harvesters, affirmed that the present duty was £50 1s. 5d. at the mint par rate of exchange, and that the natural protection in 1920 was 38 per cent. The duty upon harvesters imported from America is 40 per cent. *ad valorem*, so that if the amount of duty were £50 1s. 5d. at that rate, the invoice price would be £113 6s. The landed cost price of an imported harvester in 1920 would therefore be as under:—Invoice price in America, £113 16s.; duty at 40 per cent. *ad valorem*, £50 1s. 5d.; natural protection, 38 per cent., £43 4s. 10d.; or a total of £207 2s. 3d. The honorable member did not state the size of the machine; but, assuming it to be the largest size imported, namely, 8 feet, it means that the importers were paying £207 2s. 3d. to land it in Australia, whereas the net cash selling price last year was only £174 10s., and this year is £184.

Mr. GREGORY.—I was then dealing with the price of the reaper-thresher.

Mr. MATHEWS.—No. The honorable member was dealing with the stripper-harvester, so that if these machines enjoy the natural protection attributed to them by the honorable member, the importers are throwing away about £25 per machine. I am, however, chiefly concerned with the dumping proclivities of manufacturers abroad who have overestimated the requirements of their own local markets. I come now to the question of whether Protection imposes a burden upon the farmer. A newspaper article, which I recently perused, thus sets out the position:—

Assuming that the farmers get no benefit from Protection, either in the way of reduced prices for their machinery or the introduction of up-to-date appliances, what do the duties actually amount to? To hear some of the statements that have been made, one would think that the duties were a crushing tax on the farmers, and would soon drive them off the land, but an investigation of the figures shows that this is a fallacy. The amount of duty paid on all agricultural, horticultural, and viticultural machines for the five-year period from 1914 to 1918 inclusive totalled £433,948. The value of agricultural productions for the same period was £286,075,000, so that the duty equalled only 3s. for every £100 worth of produce. If we take the same period and spread the duty over the acreage under crop it works out to less than 1½d. per acre, or, taking it another way, the duties work out at less than one-seventh of a penny per bushel for all wheat, oats, maize, and barley raised in the years under review, namely, 1914 to 1918, that being the last year for which reliable figures are available.

Value of crops for five-year period, from 1914-1918, £274,156,452.

Bushels of wheat, oats, and barley produced for five-year period, 1914-18, 652,101,816.

Value of duty paid on all agricultural, horticultural, and viticultural implements and machines for the five-year period 1914-18, £433,948.

Acreage of wheat, hay, oats, and barley cultivated for five-year period 1914-18, 71,392,494 acres.

Duty equal to, say, 3s. for every £100 worth of produce.

Or duty equal to, say, 1½d. per acre.

Or duty equal to, say, 1-7th of a penny per bushel.

Mr. STEWART.—The honorable member's figures go to prove the value of the agricultural industry. They show it is worth fostering.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Yes. They also show how lightly this impost falls on the farmers.

Mr. GREENE.—And they do not include anything like the whole of our



agricultural products, in the production of which agricultural machinery is used.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Quite so. We are told that these duties are going to ruin the farmers. I should not have made this quotation but for certain figures quoted by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), which, I think, it entirely refutes.

Mr. GREGORY.—I pointed out that, as 75 per cent. of the agricultural machinery used here was made in Australia, every £1 increase in the duty meant a 75 per cent. increase.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member tried to prove that an increase of £1 amounted really to a £4 increase. I have heard that contention before, but it would be difficult to convince me that, if I received £1 for something, I had in reality received £4 for it. The honorable member, as reported in *Hansard*, pages 7815-6, said a good deal in regard to the supposed natural protection enjoyed by Australian manufacturers. I have here a statement in which it is pointed out that—

If his figures are no more reliable than those relating to binders, mowers, and hay-rakes, they can be disregarded altogether. He said the natural protection on binders, mowers, and hay-rakes, in 1913 and 1921, was as under:—

	1913.	1921.
Binders .. .. .	36.29	60.99
Mowers .. .. .	39.24	62.01
Hay-rakes .. .. .	32.45	55.72

He did not show how these figures were arrived at, but there is no doubt they are incorrect. Natural protection is usually considered to be freight, insurance, and all other charges except duty. The natural protection on one well-known American make of machines in 1913 and 1921 is as under:—

	1913.	1921.
Binders .. .. .	20%	19%
Mowers .. .. .	22%	22%
Hay-rakes .. .. .	20%	20%

Naturally it was higher during the war period, but the above percentages state the situation to-day. These figures include freight, insurance, bank exchange, wharfage, stacking, cartage, entries, and all other expenses except duty.

The honorable member claimed that the natural protection was in some cases 100 per cent., and in others as much as 130 per cent. greater than the figures prove it to be.

Mr. GREGORY.—The only exaggeration in the figures which I quoted was in the reference to assembling, which I quite

agree should not have been included. Apart from that item, I quoted the actual figures in regard to importations.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member will recognise that in quoting these figures in refutation of statements made by him I have no desire to be personally offensive. He laid great stress on the natural protection which he claimed was enjoyed by local manufacturers, and I am showing that it does not exist.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member admits that it exists, but not to the extent that I was advised.

Mr. GREENE.—It does not exist to anything like the extent claimed by the honorable member for Dampier.

Mr. MATHEWS.—There can be no doubt about that. The honorable member probably included as a natural protection the loss in exchange between America and Australia, but this should not be considered, since it is only a temporary disadvantage. This Tariff will continue until we amend it, but the loss in exchange between the United States of America and other countries cannot continue very long without bringing about a crisis. The present situation is of the gravest concern to financiers and businessmen in the United States of America. Almost every week we read in the newspapers cable messages setting out the concern felt by financiers and others in the United States of America in regard to the exchange position. We are told that the Government of the United States of America will have to enter into some arrangement with Great Britain to do this, that, or the other thing, and as soon as the exchange difficulty has been adjusted away will go any natural protection that our manufacturers enjoy in that respect.

I shall not enlarge upon the question. I have only to say, in conclusion, that if I thought these duties would injuriously affect the farmer, I would not vote for them. I claim, however, that the farmer must bear his share of the cost of administering the affairs of Australia. I claim, further, that it is better for him that he should have his requirements satisfied by local manufacturers, since in such circumstances he has ready access to the market, instead of having to satisfy his needs by imports from overseas. The farmer, like all other sections of the community, is also concerned in

seeing that we avoid such a financial crisis as occurred here in the early nineties. Much as he may fear increased prices as the result of increased duties on agricultural implements and machinery, he has far more to fear from a financial crash. I advise him not to take too much notice of the statements of the Taxpayers Association, which is howling for economy, and wants to bring down wages. We had exactly the same cry in the early nineties, and the reduction of wages was followed by a financial smash. If we try to bring down wages a great depression will ensue, with disastrous results alike to primary producers as well as dwellers in our cities. It is up to the farmer to see that we build up in Australia industries that will benefit him equally with all town workers.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY (Hume)** [6.15].—As one who endeavours to properly represent the primary producers of Australia, I desire to show exactly where I stand in regard to a matter of such vital importance as is the duty on agricultural implements. I do not feel justified in allowing to go uncontradicted the statements made by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). The honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews), in a telling speech, has already replied to some of them, and I desire, also, to put before the Committee other aspects of the question. My only regret is that other members of the Country party are not prepared to follow the example of the honorable member for Dampier and the honorable member for Wimmera (Mr. Stewart), who feel strongly on this question, and do not hesitate to say exactly where they stand. Every honorable member should be prepared to substantiate the views he holds.

**Mr. WIENHOLT.**—We shall do that by our votes.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—That is all very well; but this is not a question on which we ought to register a silent vote, since the imposition of duties on agricultural machinery and implements is a bone of contention amongst so many people. If the honorable member for Dampier could support his statements by recourse to the history of fiscalism in this or any other country, or by quoting authoritative statistics, I should be found voting with him. I go further, and say that if his statements were based on

fact—if it were true that the imposition of duties on agricultural implements and machinery or anything else used by the primary producer, had the effect of increasing prices—I would not vote for such duties.

**Mr. STEWART.**—I believe these duties will have that effect.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—I hold the contrary view. Every figure quoted by the honorable member for Dampier came from a biased source.

**Mr. GREENE.**—He acknowledged quite freely that he obtained his figures from the Massey-Harris people.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—In answer to my inquiry, he candidly admitted that the figures quoted by him were supplied by the Massey-Harris Company—a company of importers. Such figures are absolutely unreliable.

**Mr. STEWART.**—Then by the same token, figures supplied by Australian manufacturers must also be unreliable.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—No; because we are able to obtain the price lists issued by the Australian manufacturers. The honorable member for Dampier did not give us the benefit of any inquiries he had made in that direction. He gave us, instead, a long series of figures. It is an old saying that figures can be made to prove anything. So they can, if they are taken from only one source, and those at the source are interested parties. That is what the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) did.

**Mr. FLEMING.**—The honorable member said he had checked the figures with the price lists from Canada.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—Indeed, he did not!

**Mr. FLEMING.**—I heard him say so.

**Mr. GREENE.**—The honorable member said he had checked the figures in some instances.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—Quite so. I asked the honorable member if he had checked the figures with the price lists, and he said that in some instances he had.

**Mr. STEWART.**—And found them correct.

**Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.**—I do not know that the honorable member added those words; in any case, the "instances" might be only 1 or 2 per cent. The fair thing would have been to check the figures right through, and then quote them to the Committee; but, even had



The honorable member done so, the figures would not have borne out the statement applied by the Massey-Harris Company. What I desire to do is to follow the honorable member for Dampier in his contention, but it is difficult to know exactly where to begin. Perhaps it would be better to begin where he himself began, when he made a great point of the "natural protection" which, he says, is afforded. The honorable member contends that the freights represent a natural protection to our own manufacturers, and mean a great deal to them. When the Minister (Mr. Greene) was speaking on the first item, he expressed the opinion that this "natural protection" is largely a myth; and I am quite sure that he could have proved to the satisfaction of any fair-minded person that it is so, indeed. Had the honorable member for Dampier troubled to ask those people, who have been so careful to supply him with certain figures, to tell him what this "natural protection" really amounts to, I am quite satisfied that the reply would have shown him that it has no existence. As the honorable member did not take that course, I shall, for the benefit of the Committee, the country, and the primary producers, supply some information, which is obtained from no tainted source, but, as I claim, represents the facts of the position. I shall not bother to quote the exact words of the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) when dealing with the first item, but he then contended that this "natural protection" represents a great advantage to the manufacturers of Australia. Is the honorable member aware that, in the period from 1st July, 1914, until the 30th June, 1919, those large Canadian-American firms, to which he referred, were able to import the finished implements and machinery from Montreal to Melbourne or Sydney at a freight of only 20s. per ton of 40 cubic feet?

Mr. STEWART.—The figure given by the honorable member for Dampier was £1 2s. 6d.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—It is news to me that the honorable member gave that figure, but if he did, then all his talk about natural protection is so much thin air.

Mr. FLEMING.—Did the coming of those vessels not enable the primary producers of Australia to get their products away?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—It is only fair to show how these importations compete with local manufacturers, who have to import their steel and other raw material at freights representing ten and fifteen times that amount.

Mr. STEWART.—Have you forgotten the explanation of the honorable member for Dampier that there was an arrangement made in 1914 for five years?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The arrangement was for the benefit of those who were importing these machines into Australia, and it was mainly due to the fact that the Canadian Government were subsidizing the companies which were bringing this machinery here. The paternal Government of Canada stands by the Canadian manufacturers in a way that we here in Australia would do well to copy. As a result of that assistance, this machinery is brought over 12,000 miles of ocean at a freight equivalent to that paid for carrying machinery from, say, Melbourne to Sydney.

Mr. GREENE.—That is a point that is always overlooked.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Exactly; and the comparison made by those who talk of "natural protection" is unfair to our own manufacturers, who have to import their steel and other raw material at freights up to twelve times the amount. Any Government might well follow the example set by the Canadian Government in their efforts to build up local industries.

In the period from 1914 to 1919, Australian manufacturers were unable to procure supplies of steel from Europe and England, and large quantities were, therefore imported from America. On many occasions such steel arrived consigned to Australian implement makers at from £6 to as high as £12 per ton freight while in the same ships there were mountains high of agricultural implements from Canadian-American manufacturers carried at a freight of about £1 per ton. This shows how our local manufacturers suffer in comparison with the manufacturers of America and Canada, where the Governments stand by them and subsidize shipping companies in their interests. When the honorable member for Dampier spoke about this "natural protection," he might have told us those facts; and, as I have already said, he might have asked the

importing companies how much this "natural protection" really amounts to, instead of endeavouring to create the impression that the freights paid by them are enormous.

I have here a photograph of a bill of lading from Melbourne to Buenos Aires by the Japanese steamer *Luzon Maru*, and it is a very interesting document to consider side by side with the statements of the honorable member for Dampier. This bill of lading shows that 101 packages, representing 49 tons 5 cwts., were carried at a freight of no less than £20 per ton. The date is January, 1918, during the period that the Canadian-American manufacturers were landing goods in Australia at 20s. per ton, as compared with an outward freight of £20. It may be said that this is ancient history, but I have an instance, within a month or two, of a consignment of 10 tons of one-way disc cultivators, an Australian invention well known to our farmers, being despatched from Melbourne to Buenos Aires in the *Citta di Genova* at a freight of £10 per ton. This competes with a freight from New York to Buenos Aires of less than £3 per ton; and it is manifest that if we value our export trade we must do as other countries do, and assist our manufacturers to hold their own.

*Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.*

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member for Dampier was good enough to admit that he did not take into account the question of the assembling of the machines, and that there was not very much in the contention which he raised.

Mr. GREGORY.—Only in that regard.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member was not present when I showed from a bill of lading that it cost only about 20s. per ton to oversea manufacturers to land their goods here.

Mr. GREGORY.—Do you say that the oversea manufacturers can land their goods at £1 a ton now?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That was during the war.

Mr. GREGORY.—I gave the full particulars.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I also showed how a consignment of about 10 tons, consisting of one-way disc culti-

vators, an implement of Australian invention, was despatched from Melbourne to Buenos Ayres in the Argentine on the *Citta de Genova* at a freight of £10 per ton, while from New York to Buenos Ayres the freight at the same time was only £3 per ton. In that case there was a natural protection to the foreigner of £7 per ton.

Mr. GREGORY.—I explained that that was a contract entered into just prior to the war.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The Canadian Government by means of a subsidy enabled their manufacturers to have their manufactures brought here at £1 per ton.

Mr. GREGORY.—Have you any proof of that?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—It is so. I make it as a definite statement. Does the honorable member think it is unnatural for a Government to stand by their own manufacturers? It is the duty of a Government, in the interests of the primary and secondary producers, to stand by the manufacturers of their own country if they can, in order to allow them to build up the local industry.

Mr. STEWART.—If the Government are going to stand by their manufacturers with cheap outward freights to the markets of the world, it would not be a bad thing to apply the same principle to the primary producers also.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member will find no more ardent backer than myself in anything he wishes to have done in the interests of the primary producer, but it is also in the interests of the primary producer to so build up our manufactures here as to enable him to have a good local market, which is the best market of all. I hope we shall see the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) voting with us when the division is taken on this item, although we have not seen much of him during the debates on the Tariff. I cannot do better than repeat the words he uttered when he was a candidate for Maribyrnong some years ago. I quoted them when I spoke in the general debate on the Tariff. He pointed out how unfortunate it would be for this country in a time of war if we did not so build up our industries here that we would be able to come to the rescue of our primary producers instead of leaving them to be



the prey of foreign importers. That, in effect, was his contention, and I hope that by his vote on this item he will show that he is still of that opinion.

When I spoke on the general question, I referred at some length to agricultural implements, and do not propose to go over the same ground again. I wish to give some figures, however, in answer to the honorable member for Dampier. I refer to him specifically, because he is the only honorable member who has yet spoken on this item. He has, of course, a right to his own opinions, and I am sure he is perfectly honest in his convictions; but I cannot see how he can represent the interests, or voice the true opinions, of the man on the land when he says that the interests of the primary producers are best served by doing something that will kill the local market.

Mr. STEWART.—He did not say that.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—What the honorable member proposes would have the effect of leaving the primary producers at the mercy of a foreign monopoly.

Mr. STEWART.—He does not propose to do so.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But the effect of what the honorable member advocates would be to leave the primary producers of Australia at the mercy of the worst Combine of all, the one we cannot touch or deal with, and that is the overseas Combine.

Mr. GREGORY.—Not a bit of it. I showed that the agricultural implement manufacturers here have flourished under a low Tariff.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—If the figures I have here prove anything, they will prove the very opposite. The contention of honorable members in the Corner is that the duty on agricultural implements is passed on to the farmer. The whole history of fiscalism in this and every other country goes to demonstrate the very opposite. I am not going to quote interested bodies. I have done the honest thing by taking the price-lists. On 1st September, 1920, the Massey-Harris Company, an importing firm, quoted in their own price book the 6-ft. reaper and binder for delivery in 1921 at £125 each. On the 21st September, 1920, the McKay Harvester Company announced

that they were making reapers and binders locally, and quoted the 6-ft. machine at £95 cash. On 21st February, 1921, the Massey-Harris Company issued a new price-list, in which they quoted the 6-ft. reaper and binder at £101 cash. There is a difference of £24. The only reason why they did that was because the implement was produced locally, and the local competition forced them to reduce their price to the primary producer by that amount. Nothing could persuade me that, but for the local competition in this article, the Australian farmer would not be still paying that extra £24. I cannot see how the production of the article locally can be to the detriment of the man on the land. If it were, I would not be advocating it, but the whole history of Protection goes to demonstrate that it is to his benefit, and not to his detriment. The instance I have given is a complete answer to the argument that the duty is passed on to a farmer.

Mr. FLEMING.—Is that why they removed the duty on agricultural implements in the United States of America?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I am dealing with Australia. Here is a set of facts about what has happened at our own doors. Instead of honorable members in the Corner being able to explain it away they call attention to other countries, and ask if that is why something else was done elsewhere. Why not get right down to tin-tacks, and deal with the question at issue here? We are concerned with Australia. I will give another interesting statement from a price-list. It is not a statement from an interested firm like the Massey-Harris Company. When the honorable member for Dampier was speaking, he told me that he was quoting from a document supplied to him from that company. We ought to have something more than that. It should be backed up by the price-list, at all events, but this was not done. I have here another printed price-list which was given to me. It shows that the pre-war price (1st June, 1913) for the 6-feet reaper and binder was £39, and the post-war price (1st February, 1920) £77 10s., an increase of 98 $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—At the end of the year the price was increased to £98.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I believe that is so. The pre-war price for the

8-foot reaper thresher was £135, and the post-war price £204, representing an increase of 51 per cent., while the pre-war price of the 15-hoe grain and fertilizer drill was £38, and the post-war price £57 2s. 6d., an increase of 50 per cent. We might very well ask ourselves why in the one case was there an increase of approximately 100 per cent. and in the other an increase of only 50 per cent., because during that period the duty was not altered. There was a revenue duty of only 5 per cent. on reapers and binders, and a protective duty on reaper threshers and drills.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The price of reapers and binders increased because there was no competition, and every farmer requires them.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member for Wakefield has supplied the answer. The importers of reapers and binders were able to put up the price nearly 100 per cent. for the simple reason that there was no competition in Australia. Therefore, there is nothing in the contention of the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) that the duty caused the increase in price, because reaper threshers and drills, which are on the protected list, advanced only 51 per cent.

Mr. CHARLTON.—And if they are put on the free list they will go up 100 per cent., too.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Exactly. There is no necessity at all to enter into a labyrinth of figures to elaborate this argument. The comparisons I have been able to make furnishes an unanswerable argument, showing that as soon as the local industry is destroyed the primary producers of this country will be at the mercy of an overseas Combine.

Mr. STEWART.—The honorable member for Dampier was not arguing that we should leave the farmers at the mercy of a Combine.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But that would be the effect of the policy advocated by the members of the Corner party.

I propose now to deal with the comparison of New Zealand and Australian prices made by the honorable member for Dampier, and in this connexion I intend again to quote, not as the honorable member for Dampier did, from figures supplied by the interested manufacturers, but from the price lists. I may add

that this is not the kind of Tariff I want. I want the New Protection, under which we could control local prices, but, like other members of my party, I have to choose between this Tariff, which represents the Old Protection, and a Free Trade policy. The only figures that are of any value at all in connexion with this matter are to be found in the price lists, upon which the farmer would buy, and if the figures which I have are right, then those supplied by the honorable member for Dampier must be wrong. These are New Zealand prices under Free Trade conditions—

	1915.	1921.	Increase.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	Per cent.
1-Furrow Disc Plough	21 15 0	42 10 0	126
2-Furrow Disc Plough	23 0 0	52 10 0	128
3-Furrow Disc Plough	27 10 0	62 10 0	127
4-Furrow Disc Plough	32 0 0	72 10 0	126½

Honorable members will see that, in the course of six years, the price went up nearly 130 per cent. If there was anything at all in the Free Trade doctrine, such an advance would have been impossible. If we were not able to contrast those figures with the Australian position under Protection, it might be contended that the increase was due to enhanced cost of production, higher wages, and dearer materials; but I have been able to make a comparison between New Zealand and Australian prices for the same class of implement. The following are the figures for Australia, under Protection—

	1915.	1921.	Increase.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	Per cent.
1-Furrow Disc Plough	15 10 0	26 10 0	71
2-Furrow Disc Plough	19 0 0	33 10 0	76
3-Furrow Disc Plough	23 10 0	40 0 0	70
4-Furrow Disc Plough	28 10 0	48 0 0	68

The highest quotation in Australia was £48 for a 4-furrow disc plough as compared with £72 10s. for the same class of implement in New Zealand, and I repeat that if my figures are right, then those supplied by the honorable member for Dampier are entirely, if unconsciously, misleading. I notice that he did not



quote Argentine prices, although Argentine, like New Zealand, is a Free Trade country. In 1913, the 6-foot Sunshine harvesters were quoted at £88 in Australia, and £165 in the Argentine, and the 8-foot harvester, in Australia, £113; Argentine, £187. I come now right down to 1920, and I find that, in Australia, under Protection, the American 9-foot reaper thresher was priced at £250, while in the Argentine, under Free Trade, it was £380.

Mr. GREGORY.—Do you say it was the same class of machine?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Yes; it was made by the same company.

Mr. GREGORY.—It was not an engine-driven machine.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I understand it was the same machine. The Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) will correct me if I am wrong. I believe the Minister had something to say in reply to a letter which appeared in the Melbourne press, signed by a person styling himself "Facts, not Fiction."

Mr. GREENE.—It was exactly the same machine.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That is so; and I think the Minister's statement showed that the letter contained more fiction than fact. I hope that before the debate concludes the honorable member for Dampier will take the opportunity of substantiating the figures he has quoted.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The honorable member is quoting a machine without engine, and the honorable member for Dampier quoted one with engine.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I am quoting the same machine as the honorable member for Dampier quoted. I have tons of other figures of the same purport as those I have already submitted to the Committee, but I have quoted enough to convince every open-minded person that the argument that Protection increases the price of an article is an absolute myth. And I say, with all due respect to honorable members of the Country party, that they are not voicing the opinions of the thinking farmer when they use that argument. I cannot imagine the farmers, who are amongst the most intelligent section of the community, agreeing with any proposal which would be detrimental to local industries. It is of the utmost importance

to them that industries should be built up in Australia. The trouble, in the past, has been that the secondary industries have been confined to the cities; they should be spread throughout the Commonwealth. Apart from that, the best market the man on the land can have is the home market. Nine out of ten men on the land will agree with that contention.

Mr. FLEMING.—If they do not have to pay too much to get it.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That aspect does not enter into this argument. The home market must be destroyed if we are to introduce in Australia the conditions that obtain in New Zealand and Argentine. The figures I have quoted from the price-lists, if they do not lie, prove that under a sound system of Protection the man on the land gets the cheaper article. At the same time, he is deriving advantage from a good home market, with his customers at his own door, and he is freed from the operations of the overseas combines, with which he cannot get into touch. If he has to choose between the two systems that are offered to him, the sensible farmer will say, "Give me the industry built up in my own country and under the control of our own people, and do not leave me to the mercy of overseas combines that exploited me in the past, and will do so again if they can destroy local competition."

Mr. STEWART (Wimmera) [8.35].—A great deal of time is spent unnecessarily in trying to prove that Free Trade is not in the interests of this country. I, and the whole of the members of this party, I think, agree with that contention.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Then why did your Deputy Leader (Mr. Gregory) quote New Zealand so much?

Mr. STEWART.—To answer the arguments put forward by the Minister (Mr. Greene) and others. I do not think there is one honorable member in this chamber who does not desire to see local industries built up and Australia made great. Any man who has any other desire ought not to be a member of this House. I would not like to see our own kith and kin walking the streets in idleness while we are purchasing the goods of the importer.

No member of the Country party advocates that. Honorable members opposite have put up a good fight in the interests of the wage-earners in the secondary industries, which are mainly concentrated in the cities.

Mr. CHARLTON.—The speech of the honorable member for Hume (Mr. Parker Moloney) was in the interests of the man on the land.

Mr. STEWART.—I speak as one of the men on the land, and also as one who was born and bred in Melbourne, and worked for many years in the factories of this city. I have had opportunities of studying this question from both points of view. It has been frequently asserted during the debate that the home market is the best of all. It depends on what the home market means, and the price ruling in it. The ruling price of wheat in Australia is world's parity; in other words, the amount the farmer receives for the wheat consumed within Australia is no greater than the amount he receives for wheat sold overseas. I do not object to the Protectionist policy if it is applied all round, but what principle does it lay down? The principle of protecting our manufacturers and their workmen from the operation of world's parity, the very law which honorable members insist upon the primary producer obeying. They demand that the primary producer's wages shall be fixed, not at a special rate in Australia, but at what he can get for his produce in the markets of the world, less the highest ocean freights in the world. How often have we heard from many a platform of the unfairness of expecting white men to compete with cheap-coloured labour? Is there a man who can deny that that is what the Australian producer is doing all the time?

Mr. FENTON.—Not in the Australian market.

Mr. STEWART.—The price in the Australian market is fixed at black labour rates, or world's parity, which Australian manufacturers and workmen say they cannot fairly be asked to stand up against.

Mr. GABB.—Does the honorable member mean that India dominates the world's wheat market?

Mr. STEWART.—No. We have to pay Protectionist prices for what we wear

and for the means of production, and yet must sell our produce within Protectionist Australia at world's parity.

Mr. GABB.—How does world's parity mean black labour rates?

Mr. STEWART.—We have to compete against wheat grown by the coloured labour of India, the cheap Spanish labour of the Argentine, and the peasant labour of Russia.

Mr. GABB.—The Spaniards are not black.

Mr. STEWART.—But the Indians are.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member objects to the farmer paying Protectionist prices for his implements, and yet says he is not a Free Trader. What duty, if any, would he impose on agricultural implements?

Mr. STEWART.—I would fix the price of wheat and butter and other produce of the land on the same basis as that upon which the Australian manufacturer and workman fix their wages, namely, import parity. In other words, if wheat is 10s. per bushel in London, freight from London 2s., and duty 2s., the import parity is 14s.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—We agree with you in that.

Mr. STEWART.—I have no desire to set the workmen in the country and the workmen in the city against each other.

Honorable members representing city constituencies have put the case very well from the point of view of those for whom they speak. They have called the attention of the farmers to the position of the wage-earners in the factories. In reply, I desire to say a word or two from the point of view of the wage-earner out-back, who works, not forty-four hours a week, but sixty-six, and often more, and who does not receive double pay for holidays and Sundays. Honorable members opposite talk about the high price of wheat, but I ask them what would be the price of wheat if the primary producers worked only eight hours per day, and received double pay for holidays and for the labour of pickling wheat at night and carting water on Sundays?

Mr. MATHEWS.—When a man is working for the "boss" he is in a different position from that which he occupies when he is working for himself. I worked



a damn sight harder for the "boss" than I ever worked for myself.

Mr. STEWART.—The *Labour Call*, a very excellent paper which I make a practice of reading, contains on its front page the following placard in extremely large type:—

BOYCOTT BUTTER!

BEST AUSTRALIAN BUTTER.

Price in London, 190s. per cwt.

Price in Melbourne, 205s. per cwt.

When it is desired to bring down the price of an article, whether it be a necessity or a luxury, the best thing to do is to lessen the demand by going without.

Age, 25th May, 1921.

Don't buy to be robbed!

I do not know whether honorable member's opposite condone this. They are not anxious, when selling their labour, to compete with the world's parity, but immediately the primary producer gets something to which he thinks he is entitled, they cry out that their ancient privileges are being violated. Those who are behind this official organ of the Labour party in Victoria apparently insist that the primary producer must sell at the world's parity, but immediately he gets any more they put a placard in their organ advocating that his produce should be boycotted and brought down to black labour rates. If it is the privilege of the city worker to have a forty-four hours week, and double time for holidays, I want the same privilege extended to the workers in the country districts. If honorable members deny these privileges to country workers, I deny them to the city workers. All that honorable members opposite ask for the men and women of the city I ask for the men and women out back.

During this debate, it has been frequently asserted that the increased duty on agricultural machinery will not have the effect of increasing the price of that machinery; but if it will not have that purpose, I cannot see why it is wanted. My opinion is that it will increase the price of this requirement of the primary producer. In fact, that is the object of it. The wonderful unanimity now being displayed between representatives of the city workers and representatives of the employers is rather interesting, but it will be equally interesting to watch, when the

Tariff goes through, who will get the bigger share of the bone. I do not think there will be so much unanimity then.

The progress of America has been quoted frequently during this debate, but not one honorable member seems to have recognised that that country blazed the trail by the development of its agricultural industry. By throwing open the land in the western States, and not sitting on it, as the majority of our States are doing in regard to their Crown lands, and by encouraging the people to get back, the United States of America brought about the greatest agricultural development that has yet taken place in the history of any nation, and only after that did they begin to develop their factories.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—Much of our land we cannot sit upon, because it is covered with prickly pear.

Mr. STEWART.—The primary industry is Australia's sheet anchor, and it will continue to be so for many years to come. With our wool and wheat we can compete in the world's markets so long as the cost of production is not increased too much above what it is in other countries; but let me compare the position of the Australian farmer with that of his Canadian competitor. The Canadian pays £60 for a 6-feet reaper and binder; the Australian farmer must pay £103 for the same implement. The Canadian farmer pays £45 for a thirteen-disc drill as against £78 which the Australian farmer is obliged to pay. Similarly for a cultivator the Canadian pays £30, the Australian £50. For a 6-section harrow the Canadian pays £12; the Australian £19. For a two-furrow disc plough the Canadian price is £28, the Australian price being £43.

Mr. FENTON.—Can a Canadian farmer deal direct with the Canadian firms?

Mr. STEWART.—I cannot say; but he has the additional advantage over the Australian of being nearer the world's market. If we force up the cost of production as we are doing, the Australian farmer will be compelled to work longer hours, and speed up in order to hold his own with his competitors overseas. I want to state here that if this National Parliament does not show a little more sympathy for the primary producer, there will be something doing before very long. The vote given only the other

day upon the duty on wire netting was a distinct blow at every man and woman out-back. There are no better citizens in Australia than those men and women, and what is their reward for going into the back country, and opening up new land? Their reward is to live under the worst conditions with the worst railway services, the worst postal and medical facilities, and the worst means of educating their children. They are asked to work the longest hours for the least return of any section of the community. Why should the best citizens of the country suffer the worst conditions? It is up to this Parliament to ascertain the reason for this. If any proposal is on foot to cut down hours, and increase wages, let a start be made in the country districts. At least, let these improved conditions apply all round. The city end is not where a start should be made.

The duties proposed in this schedule are not in the interest of the primary producers. The members of the Country party are not advocates for Free Trade, but their belief is that the existing duties on agricultural machinery are quite sufficient. At any rate, they have proved to be sufficient up to date, and our manufacturers have flourished under them. Not one honorable member has endeavoured to show that the local agricultural implement makers are losing ground. On the other hand, it is a well-known fact that their establishments are larger to-day than they have ever been, but it seems to me that the larger they grow the bigger is their appetite for protective duties. I suppose that in a year or two we shall have another Tariff brought down proposing still higher duties. To-night, in a few minutes, duties have been agreed to, and not one honorable member opposite was in attendance.

MR. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member is well aware that the Sydney express was delayed for four hours.

MR. STEWART.—I am aware of that fact; but other honorable members opposite did not come over from Sydney to-day. Honorable members have allowed duties to be passed as if they had no regard for the importance of the business before the Committee.

MR. FENTON.—The honorable member's facts are wrong. Not one duty has been agreed to at this sitting.

MR. STEWART.—I am merely drawing attention to the fact that honorable members seem to be getting tired of the Tariff discussion. Evidently those of us who are endeavouring to put a brake on the fiscal madness displayed by the majority of honorable members, are wasting their time and their breath. I do not suppose I have changed one vote by the few remarks I have made, but I have risen to put forward, as well as I can, a plea for the men and women of the out-back. I do not propose to give any figures to the Committee. The case for our party has been put so well by the Deputy Leader (Mr. Gregory) that I need not elaborate on his arguments. I simply lay down the principle that, if honorable members are anxious to give protectionist prices to the workers of the city, they should also give them to the men and women outback. If they want a forty-four hours' week for the city workers, let them give a forty-four hours' week to the men in the back country.

MR. MATHEWS.—Yes, to the wage-earners there.

MR. STEWART.—To the wage-earners on the farms. If honorable members claim, in the resounding phrase of their Deputy Leader (Mr. Ryan), to be a party representing all sections of the community, let them take my advice and cut out of their official organ these "Boycott butter" appeals.

MR. MATHEWS.—If the farmers resort to dumping, they must get fits, as well as any one else would.

MR. STEWART.—In regard to dumping, the Minister (Mr. Greene) has promised us something which is rather nebulous. He tells us that a Board will be appointed to safeguard people in the Commonwealth against being exploited by the local manufacturers. If the duties are too high, the Board, he says, will act as a brake upon the local manufacturers and will review the rates. I argue the matter from the other direction. If, after the passing of this Tariff, an Australian manufacturer can come forward and prove, by producing his books, that he is being unfairly and unjustly treated by the dumper overseas, I am prepared to give him a reasonable duty. But the local manufacturer, who has an obsolete plant, and who has not adopted up-to-date



business methods in controlling his establishment, who gets a few members of Parliament together, and has a deputation to our genial friend, the Minister for Trade and Customs, to ask for an increase of duty, instead of seeking to place his business on a proper footing or obtaining an up-to-date plant, will have no support from me. That is a kind of Protection I will always fight against. But in this House there is no party more anxious than that to which I belong to see the fair thing done for Australian workmen and for the Australian nation. However members may differ from the Country party on fiscal questions, I hope that we shall not be accused of being un-Australian, or of desiring to strike a blow at Australian workmen or Australian manufacturers. What we say is, If you insist on the need for protecting manufacturers, give to the producers protection in the Australian market similar to that for which you ask for those whom you represent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.1].—I shall not attempt to cover much of the ground wandered over during the debate. The statements of the last speaker (Mr. Stewart) were wide of the issue at present before the Committee, and, I think, have been fully answered by what has fallen from other speakers. I have already set out the view, which I hold very strongly, that the primary producer derives much general benefit from the establishment of industries in the country. For the honorable member for Wimmera and his party to say, "We believe in the protection of and development of Australian industries," and at the same time, in regard to the machinery and implements which the farmer requires, to object to any but duties which do not protect, and to strive for the highest possible duties on our primary products is illogical. I believe in Protection, but I believe in applying it all round. Where we can give the primary producer direct protection, I am in favour of doing so. On other occasions during the Tariff debate I have shown that the primary producer gets many indirect benefits from the establishment of local industry. For one thing, he is relieved of much of the burden of taxation which would fall on his shoulders were not the taxable area increased by the establish-

ment of industries. The Argentine is pre-eminently a primary producing country, its secondary industries not being developed to any extent, and there the whole burden of taxation is thrown on the primary producer.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—The people of the Argentine have no financial burden, compared with ours.

Mr. GREENE.—Does not the honorable member know that the Argentine imposes an export duty of 8½d. per bushel on wheat?

Mr. WIENHOLT.—What is the national debt of that country? That is its real financial burden.

Mr. GREENE.—In addition to this export duty on wheat, the primary producers of the Argentine have to pay an export duty of 24s. per ton on frozen beef, of 2d. per lb. on butter, and of 15 per cent. on wool. Those are a few of their taxes.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—What is the taxation of the Argentine per head of population?

Mr. GREENE.—I have not that information; but I say that their farmers, in being charged an export duty of 8½d. per bushel on wheat, are more heavily taxed than our farmers.

I do not know any industry from which our primary producers have derived more benefit than the manufacture of agricultural implements, and Australia can pride itself on the fact that the machines which to-day assist the wheat farmer to harvest his crop are the result of Australian brains and Australian enterprise.

Mr. STEWART.—Do you say that this industry has progressed?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes.

Mr. STEWART.—Then why do you ask for higher duties to protect it?

Mr. GREENE.—I am not thinking of the financial progress of individual manufacturers.

Mr. STEWART.—Australians have done their share in the designing and making of agricultural implements, but they have not done everything. Take, for instance, the reaper and binder.

Mr. GREENE.—The reaper and binder is not the machine used for the harvesting of wheat. My remark had reference to the machine used for wheat harvesting. There is not a machine imported into this country for that purpose which was not originally invented and designed in Australia. That is a fact upon

which Australians have every reason to pride themselves.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister is a little overstating the case.

Mr. GREENE.—I have here set out the history of the development of these machines, and I shall quote some of it to let honorable members know what they owe to the agricultural implement makers of this country and to the Australian workmen associated with them. The first successful stripper-harvester was invented in 1884, and patented in 1885, by Australians. There had previously been attempts to devise a machine that would perform in one operation the whole work of taking off the grain and making it ready for market, but it was not till 1885 that a machine was produced in any country to fill these conditions. As the Australian stripper-harvester worked satisfactorily, it sold well when the growers realized its efficiency, and appreciated the immense reduction its use meant in the expense of harvesting. During the first fifteen years, comparatively slow progress was made, but the prejudices disappeared during that time. In 1900, the combined harvester, as it was then styled, was generally, if not universally, recognised to be the most efficient and economical machine for taking off the crop. Then the Americans took a hand. During 1900 and 1901 sample combined harvesters were purchased in Australia by the Massey-Harris Company and the International Harvester Company, both North American Combines. These machines were used as models for imitation, and both companies embarked in the manufacture of them on a large scale. They shipped considerable numbers of these imitations to Australia for sale. It was the only country using such machines. There was no demand for them in America at that time. Meanwhile, several Australian firms had gone into the manufacture of harvesters, but the wealth and weight of organization on the part of the American companies made the competition too severe for them. Well-known makers, such as James Martin and Company, Gawler, South Australia; Nicholson and Morrow, Melbourne; and Henderson Brothers, of Corowa, and other makers, were forced out of the harvester business. In the Australian com-

bined harvester there were embraced some features that were in the original stripper invented by Ridley, of South Australia, about seventy years ago. The principal of these was the combination of a stripping comb and revolving beater, by which the ripe heads of grain were taken off the standing crop and threshed. During the past twenty years many experiments were made in various parts of the Commonwealth, with the object of developing machines which would do the same work in different ways. Among many abortive attempts, one change emerged, which met with a measure of acceptance. This was the adaptation of the binder knife and reel with the stripping comb to take off the heads, instead of doing the work with the comb and beaters. The list in the Commonwealth Patent Office shows that patent rights were taken out by the Australians referred to as follows:—No. 2202/04, J. L. Smith, North Melbourne, 24th December, 1904; No. 4394/05, Matthew Wm. Charlton, of Newport, Victoria; and Douglas East Chapman, of Ascot Vale, Victoria, 19th October, 1905. Honorable members will notice that in this instance the Australian inventors were responsible for a further improvement in this particular type of machine. The patent rights which embodied the inventions of Charlton and Chapman were bought up by the Massey-Harris Company, who employed the inventors to construct a trial machine in Melbourne, which was duly tested and then taken to the works in Canada. Its manufacture was entered upon and under the name of the "Reaper Thresher" was offered for sale in Australia in 1911-12. The Australian manufacturers were actively working also, but not having the vast selling organizations of the American firms, they at first made small headway with this type of machine. But a novel and important improvement in the method of taking off the heads was invented and patented by Hedley Shepherd Taylor, of Henty, New South Wales (under patents dated 22nd October, 1913, and numbered 10989). While retaining the comb of the harvester and the knife of the binder, he dispensed with the binder reel. This reel, which swept back the ears of grain from the comb, was replaced by a double disc spiral, which forced the heads from the knife to the



elevator. The elevator conveyed them to the threshing drum. Among many useful novelties on the machine, these formed the most striking departure from recognised practice. Mr. H. V. McKay, who was approached by Taylor, recognised the possibilities of the invention, and after securing the patent rights, he at once proceeded to develop the machine. It was placed in the harvest field, and proved a success. The marked advantage of the spiral conveyor was specially manifest in "rescue work." In dealing with lodged, *i.e.*, storm-laid crop, where tangled masses of ears and straw were flattened to the earth, this new machine achieved what seemed impossible. If they were not so fully attested, its performances would be incredible. Unseasonable storms visited the fertile wheat areas of New South Wales and South Australia. Coming just about harvest time, the rain and wind laid flat the heavy crop in many hundreds of fields. The grain appeared to be lost beyond any chance of recovery; in fact, in some cases, insurance was paid on the crops. The grain was retrieved, however, with little waste, if any. This new machine, equipped with a crop-lifting attachment designed and made in the Sunshine works, was found equal to the task, and yields of 12 to 15 bags per acre were safely garnered in cases where the owners had given up hope of reaping even a bushel. It was in connexion with these disastrous storms that the New South Wales Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Dunn, was moved to make the doleful statement during last harvest season that 5,000,000 bushels of wheat had been lost. But for the work of the new machine this might have been verified, but wherever this machine was used it rescued the fallen grain, and the actual loss probably did not amount to 1,000,000 bushels.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER. — It was worse than that in 1915-16.

Mr. GREENE.—I am speaking of last year, and am endeavouring to impress upon the Committee that if it had not been for the development of these machines with the crop-lifting attachment, which was designed in Australia, millions of bushels of wheat would have been lost to the primary producer.

Mr. STEWART.—All that was done under the 1914 Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—If all that the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has claimed concerning the charges which these duties represent to the primary producer were true—I do not believe it is—the development of that machine and what it accomplished last year in Australia alone would have saved the primary producer the cost over and over again.

I pass on from that point to deal with another matter which the honorable member for Dampier has already referred to on many occasions. Here, again, he says we are imposing a crushing burden upon the primary producer.

Mr. GREGORY.—Can the Minister show the necessity of giving the industry further protection?

Mr. GREENE.—I am endeavouring to show that, if the whole of this duty were passed on, it would not be a crushing burden on the primary producer. During the last five years, 6,200 stripper-harvesters, header-harvesters, and reaper-threshers were imported into Australia.

Mr. GREGORY. — The Minister knows that I was not dealing with all agricultural machinery.

Mr. GREENE. — I am dealing with the particular item before the Committee. Although the discussion has wandered over a wide field, surely I am entitled, under the rules of debate, to confine my remarks to this item!

Mr. GREGORY.—I dealt with the others on Friday.

Mr. GREENE.—I admit that the honorable member was perfectly in order, because under the arrangement arrived at honorable members were allowed to cover the whole. During the last five years 6,200 machines were imported into Australia on which duty amounting to £87,177 was paid. During the same five-year period, the production of wheat in the Commonwealth was 567,611,036 bushels. Dividing the bushels into the amount of duty, we obtain a result of .0369d. per bushel.

Mr. STEWART.—It was one-seventh of a penny some hours ago.

Mr. GREENE.—I am giving the actual figures. Those which were quoted by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews), who cited the fraction just mentioned, covered the

whole field of agricultural machinery, while at the same time covering only the production of wheat, barley, and oats. There are many agricultural products, however, which he did not include. Had he done so, the actual charge per bushel would have been shown to be very materially less. The burden, if the whole of the duty were passed on and the farmer were charged for every machine the full extent of this additional duty, would have been—as I have just mentioned—.0369d. per bushel. That means that for every 27 bushels of wheat harvested in the Commonwealth the duty would represent 1d. The honorable member for Wimmera has said that, in his opinion, we should encourage Australian industries. I ask him, as a farmer, if he begrudges the payment of 1d. for every 27 bushels of wheat by way of encouragement to Australian industry and as a reward for Australian brains.

Mr. STEWART.—The Minister knows that it means more than that.

Mr. GREENE.—One penny in every 27 bushels is the price the farmer is asked to pay for the encouragement of Australian industry and the payment for the employment of Australian brains, which have given him back, many hundredfold, whatever they have taken from him.

Mr. STEWART.—It has been truly said that figures can be made to prove anything.

Mr. GREENE.—I would have liked the honorable member to endeavour to establish the contention that the duty is passed on to the full extent. He stated, not once, but over and over again, that for every £1 put on to the duty there was involved an additional £1 in cost to the farmer. I do not believe that, and for quite a number of reasons. I shall be able to demonstrate in a moment that it is not so; but I would like, first, to refer to one contention which the honorable member for Dampier put forward. That was, that if one had a limited quantity of goods to sell—which was the case in New Zealand—then, because of that, one would have to charge a little more in order to cover the selling cost. The honorable member stressed that as furnishing part of the excuse or reason proffered by the American companies why their machinery, in New Zealand, cost a little more than in Australia.

Mr. GREGORY.—No, I did not admit that.

Mr. GREENE.—Then the honorable member did say that when there was only a small area there were greater overhead charges. That is equally true in regard to the processes of manufacture. If a manufacturer has a comparatively small output with a certain overhead charge, that is necessarily reflected to a greater extent in the final price of the product than if the manufacturer has a larger output with the same overhead charges. That is one of the reasons why a Protective policy is necessary. The object of a Protective policy is to endeavour to create such a market in the country of production that manufacturers will be able so to develop their processes, and so increase the output of their factories, that, as a natural result of the operation of the Protective policy, they will be able to produce at a lower rate by reason of the greater mass production. That point is self-evident. So far from additional duty, which throws into the hands of the local manufacturer additional trade, necessarily tending to increase the cost of goods to the consumers in the country of their production, the effect should be the opposite.

As to whether these increased duties are passed on, I was rather interested in the figures which the honorable member for Dampier quoted. With respect to New Zealand prices to-day, all I can say is that I endeavoured, as recently as three weeks ago, to ascertain what they were. Owing to the fact that apparently the companies, which have rather suffered by the comparison of New Zealand prices with our own, seem to be keeping their price-lists very secret, and owing to our being unable to get hold of copies, I have had some difficulty in making the comparisons which I sought.

Mr. GREGORY.—Had the Minister any difficulty in obtaining the prices of the local manufacturers, which would be a very fair criterion?

Mr. GREENE.—I tried to obtain, for the purposes of comparison with the prices ruling in Australia, the quotations of those companies for the same machinery in New Zealand. And, as recently as three weeks back, I was unable to ascertain that there was any material



difference. I imagine that the sources which the honorable member for Dampier acknowledged were the same as those from which the *Argus* got information some time ago, to which I replied in the columns of that newspaper. To my communication the *Argus* had no other reply than to simply say that I was a "bumptious individual." There has never been any answer to the reply which I sent to the *Argus* on that occasion. Why? They could not answer it, because the information given to the *Argus* from that particular source, directly or indirectly, was false information. It was information which it was perfectly easy for me, with the resources at my disposal, to show was false. I do not know whether the prices, as stated by the honorable member for Dampier, are accurate or not, but there is certainly no question at all as to the prices in Australia and in New Zealand at the time the Tariff was tabled. We had the prices then in our hands, and could compare them. There was no question then as to the position. As I have already stated, I have here a list of eighty different items, and in every case at that time the New Zealand price was higher than the Australian price. In some cases it was very much higher; in some cases it was only a few shillings higher; but in no case was it lower than the Australian price. In connexion with every one of these items, there was no duty on the article in New Zealand. There was a duty imposed on every one of them in Australia. It varied. In some cases it was 5 per cent. I speak of reapers, binders, and mowers. On hay rakes it was 10 per cent., on grain fertilizer drills it was 30 per cent., on spring tooth cultivators it was 25 per cent., on maize cultivators 25 per cent., on maize drills 30 per cent., on disc harrows, diamond harrows, spring tooth harrows, and on various kinds of ploughs, including gang ploughs, four-furrow ploughs, disc ploughs, and so on, there was a duty in Australia of 25 per cent. I do not propose to read the whole of this list of items to the Committee, as it is a very long one, but I shall quote a few of them to show that there is no question as to what the prices were at the time this Tariff was tabled.

Mr. STEWART.—I suppose these prices are different from others that have been quoted this afternoon.

Mr. Greene.

Mr. GREENE.—I cannot say whether that is so or not. At the time the Tariff was tabled, I got out this list of items, and in the case of every one of them the price in New Zealand was higher than the price in Australia notwithstanding the fact that there was a duty on the article here. For reapers and binders, 5 feet, the cash price in New Zealand was £76; and the price in Australia was £75 10s., with a duty of 5 per cent. on the article. Reaper and binder, 6 feet, £77 15s. cash price in New Zealand, Customs duty in Australia 5 per cent., price in Australia £77 10s. Reaper and binder, 8 feet, £92 10s. cash price in New Zealand, duty in Australia 5 per cent., and price in Australia £92. Mower, 3½ feet, one horse, £25 7s. 6d. New Zealand cash price, Australian duty 5 per cent., Australian price £24 15s. Mower, 4½ feet, £29 5s. cash price in New Zealand, Australian duty 5 per cent., price in Australia £28 10s.

Mr. GREGORY.—Prices in New Zealand to-day are much higher than those the honorable gentleman is quoting.

Mr. GREENE.—I think I must have made it quite clear that I am quoting the prices at the time the Tariff was tabled. I have not made these comparisons since that time. For a grain fertilizer drill, 9-hoe, the New Zealand cash price was £52 17s. 6d., the Australian duty was 30 per cent., and the Australian price £46. Grain fertilizer drill, 11-hoe, £58, New Zealand cash price, Australian duty 30 per cent., Australian price £49 12s. 6d. Grain fertilizer drill, 13-hoe, £61 17s. 6d. cash price New Zealand, Australian duty 30 per cent., Australian price £53 5s. Then there were disc drills, which show practically similar results. If the contention of the honorable member for Dampier that the duty is passed on were right, what would have been the prices of these implements in Australia?

Mr. FLEMING.—If the contention of the Minister is right, why should we keep them out when they are dearer elsewhere?

Mr. GREENE.—My contention has been that if by maintaining the duty the Australian manufacturer can turn out the article in such quantities that he can stand up against these big outside combines, we should maintain the duty.

Mr. FLEMING.—But the honorable gentleman's figures show that the Aus-

tralian manufacturer is doing that without the proposed increased duty.

Mr. GREENE.—Is it not patent to the honorable member that if we had had no manufacture of these implements in Australia we should have been paying just as much, if not more, for them than New Zealanders have been paying? The honorable member for Dampier probably provided me with the best possible argument to show that the duty is not passed on. He said that the reason why, during this particular period, the foreign firms were able to sell their machines cheaper in Australia than in New Zealand, was that they had stocks in this country which they had brought in at lower prices. Consequently they were able to sell them at a lower price here. But was the price of the Australian manufacturer any higher upon that account? He was manufacturing at the same time as these machines were being imported into New Zealand, and yet he was able to compel foreign manufacturers to accept a lower price for their machines. If I wanted an argument to show that the duty is not passed on to the consumer, I cannot conceive of a better example than that with which the honorable member has supplied me.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister knows very well that the imported machines have been selling at a higher price than have machines of local manufacture.

Mr. GREENE.—If the local manufacturer is able to sell at less than the price charged for imported machines, it is perfectly manifest that he cannot be taking advantage of the whole of the duty.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Government are forcing up the price of the machines without showing any necessity for their action.

Mr. GREENE.—Why are we forcing up the price?

Mr. GREGORY.—By means of an extra duty.

Mr. GREENE.—It is of no use pursuing that line of argument with the honorable member. I have clearly demonstrated that the duty is not passed on to the consumer. Everybody admits that the price of these machines has advanced materially, but everybody knows that there are good and sufficient reasons why that advance has taken place. As a matter of fact, the prices of all materials which are used by the local manufacturer

have increased in some instances by 100, 150, and even 200 per cent.

There is one matter which was mentioned by the honorable member for Hume (Mr. Parker Moloney) to which I wish to refer. Without exception, so far as I know, machines which have not been manufactured in Australia are proportionately dearer to-day than are machines of local manufacture. Can the honorable member for Dampier explain why that is so?

Mr. STEWART.—There is nobody in this corner who argues that we should not manufacture the machines here.

Mr. GREENE.—It is very easy for the honorable member to say that. I do not know what is the manufacturing price of the biggest reaper thresher.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not know what is the manufacturer's price, but the retail price is about £240.

Mr. GREENE.—Taking the price at £240, what duty does the honorable member suggest?

Mr. GREGORY.—Fourteen pounds.

Mr. GREENE.—That would represent a duty of about 6 per cent. That is the rate which the honorable member suggests should be imposed with a view to encouraging the manufacture of agricultural machinery in this country. I think that the honorable member must stand amazed at his own modesty. Why does he not suggest the imposition of a duty of either 1 or 2 per cent.? Either would be equally effective as a small revenue duty. If such a duty were levied, we should probably only succeed in enabling the foreign manufacturer to further dump his products into this country for the purpose of crushing the local industry, and afterwards of charging the Australian farmer just what price he pleased.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—A 40 per cent. duty is a pretty stiff one.

Mr. GREENE.—It is. But we have to remember that the manufacture of reaper threshers is comparatively a new industry. This machine was invented by Australian brains, and what has been done to improve it outside of Australia is the result of copying what had been done in this country. I believe that it is advisable for us to secure the industry for the Commonwealth. The duties which we propose are, in the circumstances, those which are required, and their imposition will result in these machines being



actually made cheaper to the consumers than would otherwise be the case.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister has given us the prices of the machines in New Zealand. Will he also tell us the prices which the Canadian farmers have to pay for them?

Mr. GREENE.—If we give the Australian manufacturer an opportunity to develop the industry to the fullest extent, he will have an infinitely better chance of approaching the Canadian prices than he will have under existing conditions. I cannot agree to the amendment, the adoption of which would probably result in the wiping out of the local industry.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (Mr. GREGORY's amendment) be so inserted—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes ..	..	..	8
Noes ..	..	..	25

Majority ..	..	..	17
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#### AYES.

Bowden, E. K.	Wienholt, A.
Brennan, F.	
Cook, Robert	<i>Tellers:</i>
Fleming, W. M.	Bell, G. J.
Gregory, H.	Stewart, P. G.

#### NOES.

Anstey, F.	Mackay, G. H.
Blundell, R. P.	Makin, N. J. O.
Cameron, D. C.	Maloney, Dr.
Charlton, M.	Mathews, J.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Moloney, Parker
Corser, E. B. C.	Riley, E.
Fenton, J. E.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Foley, G.	Smith, Laird
Foster, Richard	Watkins, D.
Gabb, J. M.	West, J. E.
Greene, W. M.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Lazzarini, H. P.	Burchell, R. J.
Lister, J. H.	Story, W. H.

#### PAIR.

Gibson, W. G.	Blakeley, A.
Hill, W. C.	Catts, J. H.
Prowse, J. H.	Jackson, D. S.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [9.54].—I do not consider that a duty of 40 per cent. under the general Tariff is sufficiently high, and, therefore, without further ado, I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 15th June, 1921, general, 45 per cent."

I hope that the Minister will agree to this proposal to increase the duty by 5 per cent.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [9.56].—I had intended to move to reduce the proposed duty by 5 per cent., but the honorable member (Mr. Fenton) succeeded in getting the call of the Chair before me. His demand for an increased duty is extortionate and without reason. I did not support my honorable friends of the Country party in the division just taken because I considered they were just as unreasonable in their desire to make the protection altogether too low. I told the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) that I would support him in moving for a reduction of the duty if he would agree to a reasonable measure of protection for the industry. I had intended to speak at length on this question, but the Minister (Mr. Greene) has forestalled me by dealing with many matters on which I proposed to touch. I believe in a fairly generous protection in respect of this item for many of the reasons which have been stated by the Minister. I would remind the honorable member for Dampier and the honorable member for Wimmera (Mr. Stewart), who say that the protection under the old Tariff was sufficient, that the materials employed in the manufacture of these machines have been, and are to-day, costing from 150 per cent. to 200 per cent. more than was the cost when the previous Tariff was passed.

Mr. STEWART.—And the price of the materials has increased also overseas.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It has gone down lately overseas, but there has been no decrease in the cost here. I believe that the price of the machines now under review will fall considerably, although I do not think it will go down to the pre-war level. I would emphasize what the Minister has said by pointing out that if there is a country where agriculture owes almost everything to the inventors and manufacturers of agricultural implements and machinery, it is Australia. It is only in respect of about half-a-dozen implements altogether that we need worry as to whether or not there is a Tariff. The Australian primary producer has the most effective implements and machinery in the world. I believe, nevertheless, that less protection than that provided for in the schedule as it stands would represent a very generous treatment of the manufacturers. I know the value of the machine that is under

review. The price asked for it is undoubtedly big, but the machine itself has been a godsend to the farmer. I have seen that machine take off 30 bushels of wheat to the acre—wheat that would be worth from 7s. to 7s. 6d. per bushel—from crops which could not be touched by any other machine. It is not essential for general purposes. It is essential for crops that are “down” as the result of a storm and which would be irrecoverable by any other class of machinery. In ordinary years it is not necessary to have such a costly machine, for then an up-to-date harvester is just as effective and economical.

Mr. FLEMING.—The consequence is that the money invested in the costly machine is lying idle for four years out of five.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—And yet it is a godsend to the farmers, though one machine would be sufficient to meet the requirements of four or five men who are in a smaller way. If, however, every farmer had to possess one, it would still be a godsend to them. If I have an opportunity, instead of supporting a 5 per cent. increase, I shall move a decrease of 5 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—I cannot agree to the increase as moved.

Amendment negatived.

Amendment (by Mr. RICHARD FOSTER) negatived—

That the following words be inserted after sub-item (A):—“And on and after 15th June, 1921, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.”

Item agreed to.

Item 166 (Strippers) agreed to.

Item 167—

Metal parts of reaper threshers, stripper harvesters, strippers, and harvesters, n.e.i., per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2½d.; general, 2½d.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.1].—I intend to move that these duties be *ad valorem* 10, 12½, and 15 per cent.

If the Minister (Mr. Greene) will not accept this amendment, it is, of course, no use my “beating the air,” but it is a most wicked proceeding, in connexion with any Tariff, to seek to impose such heavy duties on the parts required for the repair of the machines.

I am informed that there is one firm in this city that has £300,000 worth of such parts in stock, and if the proposed heavy duties are imposed it will mean heavy charges when any little repairs are required.

Mr. FLEMING.—The proposed duties will render many of the machines quite useless.

Mr. GREGORY.—Quite so.

Mr. GREENE.—Would the honorable member consent to the same *ad valorem* duties as on the machines?

Mr. GREGORY.—And make the duties 25, 35, and 40 per cent.?

Mr. GREENE.—There has always been this arrangement in the Tariff. We have raised the general rate, but the British rate remains exactly the same as since 1908.

Mr. GREGORY.—In my opinion, a duty of 35 per cent. on parts would be enormous, and involve the users in great expense, owing to the high prices which follow on high duties. I hope that the Minister will, at any rate, put the duty at the old rate.

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) proposed—

That the following words be added:—“And on and after 15th June, 1921, per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2d.; general, 2d.”

Mr. STEWART (Wimmera) [10.6].—The Minister (Mr. Greene) has made one or two observations on this and the previous item to which I should like to briefly reply. The rather sneering charge has been made that a section of the primary producers are advocating Protection for themselves, with Free Trade for the rest of the community. My reply to that frequent accusation is that the producers have, as it were, had Protection forced down their throats, and they insist that if certain sections of the community are to have protective duties, they themselves may as well have “a cut.” The inference of such remarks as those of the Minister is that we are reaching out for protective duties, whilst seeking to prevent others having what we desire ourselves. This I emphatically deny.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.



Item 168 (Machinery, viz. . . . sewing machines, &c.).

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [10.8].—Sewing machines are now being made in this country, and I should like to know whether the Minister (Mr. Greene) is in earnest in submitting the proposed duties.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.9].—As I explained before, this is one of the deferred duties, depending on whether the industry is established. However, I have no objection, if the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) would prefer to alter the date from 1922 to 1923, though this duty will not be imposed unless the industry is definitely established to such an extent as to reasonably be able to supply Australian requirements.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—I have no intention of moving an amendment.

**Mr. GREENE**.—I only wish to make it quite clear that this is a deferred duty, placed in the Tariff as the definite promise of Parliament to anybody who establishes the industry; it means nothing more.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [10.10].—I am pleased to be able to point out that the big newspaper will be able to get its monoline or linotype in free of duty, while the poor widow will have to pay a duty of £3 on her sewing machine.

**Mr. MATHEWS** (Melbourne Ports) [10.11].—I intended to rise before the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) spoke, and it was that "poor widow woman" that I wished to speak of. There have been no profiteers like the exploiters of sewing machines in Australia in the last few years. The metalwork in the very best sewing machine, with all the inflated prices due to the war, is worth about £5, but with a little cabinetmaking thrown in they charge from £17 to £20 for it. If, thirty-five years ago, a duty had been placed on sewing machines in Victoria to encourage their local manufacture, as was then proposed, we should have been getting them for £10 or £12 each. As it is, they have this market on their own, and have exploited the people of Australia. We have had the values of these machines

explained to us time after time by those associated with their manufacture, and we know that what I am saying is a fact. In those days it was not the "poor widow woman," but the poor seamstress that was pleaded for. The Free Traders pictured in harrowing terms the position of the poor seamstress in Australia, who had to work from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night by candle-light, and the injustice of taxing the sewing machine by which she earned her living.

**Mr. ROBERT COOK**.—And now we are taxing her candle, too.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—I am pleased to see this duty included in the schedule, but £2 10s. is not enough, though it is a start. I am sure that the manufacture of sewing machines would be undertaken properly in Australia if a decent opportunity were offered. As in the case of the wheelbarrow, there is nothing much ingenious about the machine. The metalwork is all cast, and there are no great engineering difficulties associated with it. There is nothing in it but what can be made in Australia. If we cannot get new patents we should compel Singers and Wertheims to come here and manufacture their machines locally, instead of bringing them out in pieces and assembling them here. I believe that hundreds of thousands of pounds might have been saved to Australia long ago and another industry established, by means of a duty on this item.

Item agreed to.

Item 169 (Machinery, viz., linotype, machines, &c.).

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.14].—Under the Tariff as it stands, cash registers are dutiable. I propose to bring them under this item.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—Are you going to take the tax off?

**Mr. GREENE**.—Yes.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—Why cannot we get a little revenue from them?

**Mr. GREENE**.—We shall get some revenue. So far as I can learn, there is no possibility of the machines being made in Australia. I am therefore proposing a preferential rate in favour of Great Britain, which becomes a revenue duty

when the article comes from any other country. I move—

That the item be amended by inserting before the word linotype the letter (A), and by adding the following paragraph:—

- (B) Cash registers, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.; and on and after 15th June, 1921, ad val., British, free, intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 170—

- (D) Rock boring machines, n.e.i., ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.  
 (E) Coal cutting machines, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.  
 (F) Rotary and percussive rock drills, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie). [10.15].—The articles enumerated in this item affect mining, which is one of those industries that have done a great deal towards the development of every other occupation in Australia. Every duty put on the machinery used in that industry means practically an impost on the industry itself. During the past five years it has had many imposts put upon it. Not only will it have to stand any increases in the Tariff, but it has had to bear, in almost every instance, the extra cost imposed upon it by the conditions existing now as compared with the pre-war period. There is not an article used in mining which has not shown a rise in price to the extent of at least 25 per cent. since 1914, whilst in some cases the price has increased ten or twelvefold. Mining, at present, needs the greatest protection that Australia can give it.

**Mr. BRENNAN.**—Have you not found that the duties decrease the price?

**Mr. FOLEY.**—No. All the articles covered by sub-items A to F have increased in price. The duties on them have been raised, and that increase must be passed on, first of all, to the mine-owner, then through the mine-owner to the workman in the mine, and then through him to the industry. I shall not say, as the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews) does, that I do not care a jot for the manufacturer or the mine-owner. I do care

for the mine-owner, and I care also for the men working in the mines and for the mining industry itself. If there were no men to put capital into mines, we should have no mining industry, and there would be no scope for miners to work. No man in that industry, whether employer or employee, begrudges any one doing well, because a man working in the mines to-day might be a mine-owner to-morrow. I represent one portion of the mining industry, where the best possible conditions have been created by co-operation between employer and employed. The conditions were not changed until some one altogether outside the mining industry took action.

**Mr. MAKIN.**—I saw some pretty bad conditions over in Kalgoorlie.

**Mr. FOLEY.**—The honorable member, I believe, was going to give every one in Kalgoorlie a brick house to live in, but the houses they have at present suit them much better. No doubt the honorable member thinks that, because he was over there during an election campaign, he knows all about Kalgoorlie, though I suppose he did not go outside the main street. I speak from a life-long connexion with the mining industry in Kalgoorlie. The honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews) has expressed his indifference as to its future, but I can assure him that if this impost is placed upon the industry, it cannot be carried on much longer. Notwithstanding what the honorable member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Makin) has said, there are, on the Kalgoorlie gold-fields, men, who intend to remain there as long as there is gold to be won.

**Mr. MAKIN.**—But they would sooner have brick houses to live in than their present homes.

**Mr. FOLEY.**—The honorable member must not suggest that I want to see them living in "shacks."

**Mr. MAKIN.**—No; but you said they were satisfied to live in their present "shacks."

**Mr. FOLEY.**—I said no such thing. I do not admit that they are living in "shacks." I have voted for a protective duty in respect of many items in the schedule, believing that it is possible by this means to build up manufacturing industries in this country.



Mr. FENTON.—Then will you vote for all such items?

Mr. FOLEY.—I have done so on every occasion, and I defy the honorable member for Maribyrnong to prove otherwise.

Mr. FENTON.—I shall keep you to your word.

Mr. FOLEY.—I am prepared to give sympathetic consideration to every request for a protective duty in respect of any industry that can be profitably established in Australia, but I want the Committee to know that those connected with the mining industry in Western Australia can obtain material more cheaply from Great Britain than from the eastern States.

Mr. RILEY.—You can also import cheap labour.

Mr. FOLEY.—The labourites of Western Australia have never undercut the Australian miner's wages. I want the Committee to realize that all the work in the Western Australian mines is done by machinery, which has made it impossible for the miners there to break ore at a lower cost than by black labour in South Africa, so there should be every inducement to give relief to the industry by encouraging the use of the most scientific appliances. Some of the mining companies of my State have scrapped plant costing £150,000 in order to install the most up-to-date mining machinery so that the mines may reach their highest point of proficiency in regard to production. Rock drills are essential, and, therefore, should be put in the same category as coal-cutting machines, which are on the free list.

Mr. CHARLTON.—They are listed at 27½ per cent., 35 per cent., and 40 per cent.

Mr. FOLEY.—If the honorable member for Hunter will make inquiries he will find that it is intended to place coal-cutting machines on the free list, and I want the same to be done in regard to machinery for metalliferous mines. It has been suggested that this machinery is being made in Australia, but I defy any honorable member to prove that rotary drills are being manufactured in this country.

Mr. MAKIN.—Give the manufacturers an order, and they will make them.

Mr. FOLEY.—The honorable member should speak of something he knows.

Mr. GREENE.—So far as I know, those drills are not being made in Australia.

Mr. FOLEY.—The rotary and percussive rock drills, in regard to which I desire the duty removed, are not being manufactured here. Another class of rock-boring machine covered by this item is being made in Australia by the Goldfields Diamond Drilling Company, Melbourne; Hector Henderson Limited, Brisbane; James Steel Engineering Company Limited, Marrickville; Overall McCray Limited, Rozelle, New South Wales; Southern Cross Windmill Company Limited, St. Peters, New South Wales; and the Toowoomba Foundry Company Limited; and I am not asking for any reduction in regard to them; but those firms are not manufacturing rotary and percussive rock drills.

Mr. GREENE.—That is so.

Mr. FOLEY.—In the general debate on the Tariff, I mentioned that these rock drills were being made in Australia at one time, and they were excellent for certain work, but the makers had not enterprise or initiative enough to produce a drill up to the standard required by the miners. If the Minister (Mr. Greene) will assure me that he intends to give some redress in this respect, I shall not discuss the matter further.

Mr. CORSER (Wide Bay) [10.32].—I ask the Minister (Mr. Greene) to consider well before he agrees to reduce any of the duties in respect to this item. Walkers Limited, of Maryborough, Queensland, are one of the most enterprising firms in Australia, and the mere fact that certain machinery mentioned in item 170 is not being made in Western Australia is no reason why protection should be removed from those people who are making them in Queensland. In a letter to me, Walkers Limited say—

As you know, we have just laid down a large steam-hammer, furnace, &c., costing us thousands of pounds for the manufacture of forging mill roller shafts and other heavy forgings.

They point out that this schedule represents an increase of only 7½ and 10 per cent. upon the duties of 1914, and they suggest the increase of another 7½ per cent. They say—

In this connexion I desire to draw your attention to the fact that large American, Canadian, and British firms and combines are circularizing Australia and appointing agents all

over the State in connexion with the production of sugar machinery forgings, locomotives, and mining machinery. Firms like ours should be protected against this propaganda. We received a circular from Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company quoting for sugar-mill rollers.

There is no doubt that an attempt is being made by overseas manufacturers to dump in Australia some of the machinery that can be, and is being, made by Walkers Limited.

Mr. FENTON.—Does that letter refer to rock drills?

Mr. CORSER.—The encouragement given by this Tariff has induced the firm to make considerable alterations and additions to its plant during the last twelve months, and when the two ships now being constructed in their yards are completed they intend to occupy the space that will be vacated for the manufacture of other articles protected by this schedule. I ask the Minister to make full inquiry as to whether rock drills are being manufactured before he accedes to the request to decrease the duty.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.37].—We do not propose to interfere with the duties upon the articles to which the honorable member for Wide Bay (Mr. Corser) has referred. But we have made most careful inquiry since the Tariff was framed to ascertain whether rotary and percussive rock drills and coal-cutting machines are being, or are likely to be, made in Australia. I have decided to ask the Committee to agree to an amendment of sub-items E and F, but not to interfere with the other duties. There is no object in imposing a duty on a big industry when there is no compensation gained by the establishment of another industry.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We get a little additional revenue.

Mr. GREENE.—Certainly, the duties do produce a little revenue. Duties have been imposed on these rotary and percussive rock drills since 1914; and on rock-boring machines since 1908.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The latter duty dates back further than that.

Mr. GREENE.—And the industry has never been established.

Mr. GREGORY.—Rotary and percussive rock drills were free under the 1908 Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—But they have been dutiable since 1914, and I see no probability of their being manufactured in this country. The Bendigo Amalgamated Gold Mines make drills for their own use, but otherwise none are produced in Australia. I therefore move—

That sub-item (E) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 15th June, 1921, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent."

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [10.40].—The Minister (Mr. Greene) ought to have taken honorable members more fully into his confidence. The impression is conveyed that the duties contained in this schedule are paid by importers of machinery, but, as a matter of fact, a little while ago coal-cutting machines were placed by the Minister on the free list so far as the British preferential Tariff was concerned, and a 10 per cent. duty imposed for the general Tariff. When we come to item 174 (Machine tools and appliances as prescribed by departmental by-laws), I shall ask the Committee whether the Minister is to be given the power to place any item on the free list at his own sweet will. He recently regarded a tram rail as an appliance, which shows how elastic his conscience is in regard to such a matter. The man who is anxious to bore for oil or to prospect for gold in the interior is called upon to pay from 27½ to 40 per cent. duty on the machinery he requires, whereas a coal-cutting machine, employed in one of the most stable and profitable industries in Australia, is permitted to come in free or on payment of a 10 per cent. duty under the general Tariff. It would be extraordinary for honorable members to uphold such a policy whereby the man who invests £10,000 in a copper mine, with the prospect of, perhaps, getting no return for his money, is to be obliged to pay from 27½ to 40 per cent. duty on the machinery he imports—

Mr. GREENE.—If the mining machinery required by such a man is not made in Australia, the matter is reviewed by myself, and in nearly every case that class of machinery comes in free of duty.

Mr. GREGORY.—But that is the anomaly of the position. Honorable members of this Committee should realize their responsibility in this regard, and fix the Tariff rates; that duty should not be left to the Minister. The man who invests his money in



the stable and profitable industry of coal mining is permitted to import his machinery free of duty, or on the payment of 10 per cent. duty under the general Tariff, whereas the man who invests his capital in a speculative venture, such as copper mining or in boring for oil, is called upon to pay up to 40 per cent. duty.

Amendment agreed to.

Sub-item r similarly amended.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Progress reported.

## ADJOURNMENT.

### EXPORT OF METALS.

Motion (by Sir JOSEPH COOK) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [10.49].—Some time ago an embargo was placed on the export of metal, which had a serious effect upon the metal industry of Australia. After a lot of difficulty, we had the embargo removed, and I understood that there would be no further trouble. A little while ago, however, I received a letter from Western Australia about which I asked the Minister (Mr. Greene) a question, and instead of answering it forthwith, he asked me to give notice of it. I now enter my protest against an outside authority like the Australian Metal Exchange being given administrative control of the export of metals from this country. I do not know what powers this organization has been endowed with, but I draw the attention of the Minister to the following complaint contained in a letter received by me from Messrs. Paterson & Company Limited, of Perth. They say—

Some time ago we understood that metals, especially lead, could be shipped without a permit. . . . Last week we received an order for 2 tons from Java, and there was a boat going out the following day, but before we were able to ship we were asked for our permit, as the authorities had no advice of it being allowed to be exported. This meant that we lost the opportunity of shipping.

Apparently they had not made application to the Australian Metal Exchange for a permit. I do not know under what authority the Minister insists—if he does insist—that any persons exporting metals from this country must obtain a permit and give full particulars in regard

to the sale and the place of export. It is an extraordinary thing that exporters should have to give this small organization in Melbourne full information about the disposal of their products. I wish to know from the Minister if it is necessary, when metals are being sent out of the country, that full information about the transaction shall be given to the Australian Metal Exchange, and a permit obtained from that body. If so, by what authority does the Minister allow this organization to control exportation?

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.53].—The honorable member mentioned this matter to me some days ago, and I must plead guilty to having forgotten it, having been much engaged with other business. Therefore, I have not had an opportunity to look into the facts. The position in regard to the exportation of metals is not exactly what the honorable member represented it to be. It is common knowledge that at the outbreak of the war Australia, in common with the rest of the world, was in the hands of a great German Combine, so far as her base metal industry was concerned. Steps were taken to break down that Combine, and to deal with the difficulties which its existence had created. Now, although there is free exportation of metals, we are keeping a register—and shall do so for some time—of the movements of our metals, so that we may know where they go, and what becomes of them. There is a possibility of other combinations being formed, and of our base metal industry again passing into foreign hands.

**Mr. GREGORY.**—Cannot what is necessary be done by your Department without requiring all the particulars of sale?

**Mr. GREENE.**—The honorable member has suggested that it is the Australian Metal Exchange that grants permits for exportation, but that is not so. These permits are granted only by the Department over which I preside. They are granted on the condition that the exporters register the channel through which the metals are to pass out of Australia. So far as I know, we do not ask for particulars as to the price at which metals are sold, but we insist on knowing their destination. That is all the information that is required. As the Australian Metal Exchange was in existence, the Government

thought that it would save expense in getting it to keep this registration instead of doing it ourselves. If the honorable member desires, I shall look into the matter further, and see whether, without great additional expense, the whole business can be kept in the hands of the Government.

Mr. GREGORY.—I think that the fullest particulars are required of exporters.

Mr. FOLEY.—Yes. The conditions of sale and the price.

Mr. GREENE.—I think that all that we want to know is the actual destination of the metals, but I shall ascertain what particulars are actually asked for. I know what it is that we wish to do, and if anything unnecessary is done to secure that object, I am prepared—and I think I can speak for the Acting Prime Minister in this matter—

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Quite so.

Mr. GREENE.—To dispense with the giving of particulars which it may be deemed objectionable to require. The Government have only one object in view, and that is to serve the interest of the country by securing its safety.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 10.46 p.m.

## House of Representatives.

Wednesday, 15 June, 1921.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter) took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### CENSUS.

Mr. FENTON.—I ask the Minister for Home and Territories whether he will be able to inform us before the session closes what is the population of each State, members generally being anxious for the information, because of the probable redistribution of seats?

Mr. WISE.—I hope to have the figures to-day.

### CONFERENCE WITH SOLDIERS' REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. LISTER.—Some time ago the Minister representing the Minister for Re-

patriation said that it was his intention to meet in conference representatives of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' League, the Fathers' Association, and other bodies, to discuss matters affecting the welfare of soldiers, and that he would bring with him the Prime Minister. Is the Minister now in a position to state when that conference is likely to be held?

Mr. RODGERS.—I promised to have with the organizations mentioned a round-table talk on subjects affecting the general welfare of the soldier, and that the Prime Minister would be present; but I was unable to obtain a fitting opportunity, and as the Minister for Repatriation (Senator Millen) was on the eve of returning to Australia, I let the matter await his return. It is now one for him to deal with. I shall see my honorable colleague, and let the honorable member have an early answer to his question.

### DUTY ON FENCING WIRE.

Mr. GREGORY.—A great deal of fencing is being done by pastoralists in Western Australia with 14 gauge wire, and I have just received from that State a telegram in which these words occur—

Amended duty on fourteen and lighter gauge wires will impose serious restrictions on fourteen gauge high tensile steel wire of which fair quantity used for fencing as duty will be increased from four pounds ten to about eighteen pounds a ton.

I do not think that it will amount to as much as that; but it will be over £14 per ton. I wish to know whether the Minister proposes to take action, so that 14-gauge fencing wire may be put on the same footing as ordinary fencing wire.

Mr. GREENE.—Will the honorable member give me an opportunity to look into the matter?

Mr. GREGORY.—I spoke to the Minister about it last Saturday.

Mr. GREENE.—Yes; but so many persons speak to me on various subjects that it is difficult to keep every conversation in mind. It is not our intention that fencing wire shall be included, and if it be necessary, in order to get over the difficulty, to increase the gauge from 14 to 16-gauge, or to take some action of that kind, we shall do it.



## HIGH COMMISSIONSHIP.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I have heard from a reliable source that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has asked the Prime Minister "when his old friend Joe Cook is coming over to be High Commissioner." Will the Treasurer be good enough to gratify the curiosity in this regard of my old friend the Prince of Wales?

Question not answered.

## WAR PENSION ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [2.35].—(By leave.)—A few days ago, the administration of the Department which pays war gratuities and pensions was discussed, and I had a few words to say on the subject. I have also approached the Acting Prime Minister about several matters, and he has done what he could for me. But there is one case about which I have been in correspondence with the Department for months, during which I have received a letter from Mulvaney, dated the 23rd March, "*re* 1597 Kent, 21st Battalion," saying that he was in New Zealand; a letter from Cooley, dated the 31st March, saying that "1597 Private Kent, 21st Battalion," had lodged application for gratuity in New Zealand; a letter from Mulvaney, dated the 4th April, about "1597 Private Kent, 21st Battalion"; another letter from Mulvaney, dated the 5th May, saying that they were still awaiting a reply from "1597 Private Kent" in New Zealand; another letter, dated the 13th May, informing me that the delay in dealing with the matter was owing to the fact that "1597 Kent" had left New Zealand; and another letter on the 23rd May, in which the District Finance Officer wrote that "1597 Kent, 21st Battalion," had lodged claim with order to pay agent. Notwithstanding all that correspondence with the Department, when I wrote to the Acting Prime Minister, protesting against the delay, and saying that a deserted wife was concerned, I was told that the Department had no knowledge of "1597 Private Kent." If something definite is not done about this case very soon, I shall move the adjournment of the House day after day until I get satisfaction.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—As the honorable member has put the case—and, of course, his is an *ex parte* statement—the last reply he has received is a ridiculous one. I shall have an inquiry made into the case.

## CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY.

Mr. GREGORY.—Will the Minister for Trade and Customs lay on the table the correspondence and cables sent to and received from America, relating to the prices paid by farmers in Canada for agricultural machinery?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes; any ordinary communications. I do not know that some of the communications may not be confidential.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY.

## NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES.

Dr. MALONEY.—In view of the fact that the people of the Northern Territory hold the record for voluntary enlistment and the per-head subscription for the Red Cross Fund, and have no parliamentary representative, will the Acting Prime Minister consider the holding in abeyance of the sentences passed upon residents of the Territory for non-payment of taxes?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I cannot say now that these persons will have their sentences remitted; but I have a reply to give to another question on the same subject. All these matters must await the return of the Minister for Home and Territories (Mr. Poynton), who has been making an investigation on the spot, and whose genuine Labour sympathies very few who know him will in the least question.

Dr. MALONEY.—Hold over the sentences until the Minister returns.

Mr. RYAN.—They will have been served by then.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—If so, the delinquents will have learned the lesson that they should stand up to their civic obligations.

Dr. MALONEY.—If I were there, I would be with them.

## REPATRIATION DEPARTMENT.

## MENTAL PATIENTS.

Mr. LISTER.—Will the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation lay on the table of the Library all papers relating to the suggested removal of military mental patients from the Mont Park Hospital to Kew and sundry other asylums?

Mr. RODGERS.—I shall confer with the Minister, and, if he approves, will have the papers laid on the table of the Library.

## IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

## AGENDA PAPER.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Has the Acting Prime Minister noticed a cablegram stating that the House of Commons is to be given the opportunity of discussing the agenda paper for the Imperial Conference; and, if the right honorable gentleman is aware of the full contents of that paper, will he make them known to honorable members?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The agenda paper for the Imperial Conference is already a record of this Parliament.

## SAVINGS BANKS.

## RATES OF INTEREST.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

1. What are the rates of interest paid on small amounts deposited in the State and the Commonwealth Savings Banks respectively in Victoria?

2. What is the reason for the difference of such rates of interest?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are—

1. The following are the rates of interest paid on deposits referred to:—Victorian State Savings Bank, 4 per cent. per annum up to £500; Commonwealth Savings Bank,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum up to £1,000, and 3 per cent. on excess deposits over £1,000, the maximum interest-earning deposits being £1,300.

2. The power to fix rates of interest is specifically placed in the hands of the Governor of the Bank by section 38 of the Commonwealth Bank Act 1911, and I am not aware of the reasons that actuated him in fixing the rates now obtaining.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY.

## REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT.

Mr. STEWART (for Dr. EARLE PAGE) asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

When does the Government propose to bring in legislation to secure representation of the Northern Territory in the Federal Parliament?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The Government has submitted legislation with this end in view, and it was decisively rejected by the Senate. Any further proposals should, I think, await the return of the Minister who has lately investigated the conditions of the Territory.

## POWERS OF POSTMASTERS.

Mr. ANSTEY asked the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. Will he state under what provision of the Commonwealth Public Service Act, and by whose authority under this Act, has a postmaster in the metropolitan area of Melbourne East been invested with authority to caution or reprimand in writing an officer under his control, and to record such caution or reprimand in the official records of the Department against the officer?

2. Will he cause an instruction to be issued that postmasters shall not assume a power which, under the Commonwealth Public Service Act, is vested only in the Chief Officer of the Department in a State?

Mr. WISE.—The answer to the honorable member's questions is as follows:—

1 and 2. There is no provision in the Act under which postmasters may assume a power vested in the Chief Officer. If the honorable member will furnish me with details of any cases in which a postmaster is said to have assumed such power, I will have inquiries made.

## BURNETT LANDS.

Mr. CAMERON asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Did the Government of Queensland formally apply for a loan of £2,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government for the purpose of developing the Burnett Land settlement scheme?

2. If so, upon what date?

3. Has the Commonwealth Government considered the matter and arrived at a definite decision with regard thereto?

4. If so, has that decision been officially conveyed to the Government of Queensland?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I have endeavoured during the greater portion of this morning to ascertain exactly what applications have been received in reference to this question, but I can find no trace



of any. However, I shall have the matter sifted to the bottom, and when I am in a position to do so shall make a statement to the House concerning it. I shall do this in my own interests, because I find that in Queensland I am being accused of victimizing that State because there happens to be a Labour Government in power there. Of course, this assertion is just about as true as many others which are being thrown about the country with so much recklessness and irresponsibility at the present time.

### PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Defence Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1921, No. 108.

New Guinea Act—Ordinance of 1921—No. 6—Expropriation.

Public Service Act—Appointments of R. S. Browne and G. M. Evans, Attorney-General's Department.

### TARIFF.

*In Committee of Ways and Means:*

Consideration resumed from 14th June (*vide* page 9044):

#### DIVISION V.—METALS AND MACHINERY.\*

\*Motive power, engine combinations, and power connexions are dutiable under their respective headings when not integral parts of machines, machinery, or machine tools.

#### Item 171—

Machinery, machines, and appliances:—

(A) Hay rakes, horse, ad val. British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.; and on and after 1st January, 1921, each, British, £1 15s.; intermediate, £2 15s.; general, £3; or ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

(B) Reapers and binders, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.; and on and after 1st January, 1921, each, British, £6 10s.; intermediate, £9 10s.; general, £10; or ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher duty.

(C) Mowers, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.; and on and after 1st January, 1921, each, British, £2 8s.; intermediate, £3 15s.; general, £4; or ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

(D) Metal parts n.e.i. of hay rakes (horse), reapers and binders, and mowers, ad val., British, free, intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent., and on and after 1st January, 1921, per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2½d.; general, 2½; or ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

(E) Metal parts of hay rakes (horse), reapers and binders, and mowers, viz.:—Knife sections, and ledger plates, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [2.45].—No doubt the Minister (Mr. Greene) will agree to reduce the duty on metal parts of reapers, binders, mowers, and rakes, as he did in connexion with a preceding item.

Mr. GREENE.—Yes, I shall do so.

Mr. GREGORY.—In regard to the duty on reapers and binders, I want the Government to strike out the *ad valorem* rates. Increased duties having been placed on steel, I naturally assume that the Minister would insist on having a higher fixed duty upon reapers and binders if the *ad valorem* rates were struck out. In this schedule there is a fixed duty on reapers and binders of £6 10s. British, £9 10s. intermediate and £10 general, or an *ad valorem* duty of 30 per cent. British, 40 per cent. intermediate, and 45 per cent. general, and the importer of the machine pays whichever rate returns the higher duty. My wisest course is to ask for a reduction of the *ad valorem* duty on the first sub-item, although I quite recognise that without the Minister's concurrence I have no chance of securing any reduction; but I want to impress honorable members with the fact that the imposition of a 45 per cent. duty against Canada, where most of these machines are made, will mean placing a big handicap upon the purchasers of them, because in common with other machinery the cost of these implements has risen enormously, not only in Australia, but in every other part of the world. Therefore, I hope the Minister will see his way clear to make some reduction. Prior to the 1908 Tariff reapers and binders were on the free list. In the 1908 Tariff there was a provision making them dutiable in certain circumstances, but it did not become operative. Under the 1914 war Tariff

reapers and binders were made dutiable at 5 per cent. under the general division, and under the 1920 Tariff the duty was 10 per cent. until the 31st December, 1920. The duties on this class of machinery under the general Tariff were fixed to operate after the 1st January, 1921, as follows:—Hay rakes, £3, or 45 per cent.; reapers and binders, £10, or 45 per cent.; mowers, £4, or 45 per cent., whichever rate returned the higher duty, which, undoubtedly, owing to the high cost of this machinery, the *ad valorem* rate would do. These higher rates were enforced on reapers and binders, but in respect to rakes and mowers they were suspended until the 1st July of this year under a regulation framed by the Minister.

I have already referred to the natural protection afforded to locally produced machines. The figures given by me on a previous occasion included the cost of assembling, and in those I intend quoting there will need to be deducted from the natural protection an amount on that account. The natural protection on a 6-ft. binder in 1914 was 30 per cent., but owing to increased freights it is now 61 per cent. The figures in respect to a 4-ft. mower are 39 per cent. in 1914 and 61 per cent. to-day, and on a 9-ft. hay rake 32 per cent. and 53 per cent. From each of these items we can deduct 10 to 12 per cent. for the assembling of the machines. The Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) is compelled to add 10 per cent. to the value of the machines under the Customs Act, and a 45 per cent. duty, on the present basis of commercial exchange, really means an impost of a little over 62 per cent., so that protection, both natural and that provided by the Tariff, amounts to considerably over 100 per cent. on each machine. It is not my intention to refer at length to the local productions, but we know that in Victoria last year machines were produced by Mr. H. V. McKay at the Sunshine Harvester Works. These machines were inspected by some honorable members, and so far as one could judge they appeared to be particularly serviceable. It is difficult, however, to judge their suitability except under actual working conditions in the field; but there seems to

be no reason why machines of this type should not be manufactured in Australia on a large scale. Knowing the policy of the Government, I believe that some duty will be imposed, although my personal opinion is that machines of this type should be admitted free on account of the natural protection afforded. Until last year reapers and binders had never been made in Australia, but since then three or four machines have been manufactured. The duty was made effective on the 1st January of this year, and up to that time machines had never been manufactured in any quantity, although to-day I believe they are being produced somewhat extensively. It is, therefore, to be assumed that before the coming harvest manufacturers will be able to supply some machines, although not sufficient to meet requirements. Are we going to say that the farmers of Australia must purchase machines which have never had what can be termed an effectual trial?

MR. WATKINS.—To what machine is the honorable member referring?

MR. GREGORY.—The reaper and binder. I propose moving an amendment asking for a reduction in the duty on the other types mentioned in this item. It is not my intention to attempt to disparage in the slightest degree the products of Australian manufacturers, because I have no wish to do so. I would be very pleased if Australian manufacturers were producing machines superior to anything imported into the Commonwealth, but at the same time we are not justified in compelling farmers to purchase machines which have not had an effective trial. The present price of £102 for a reaper and binder is based upon a 10 per cent. duty, and if the importers had not imported a large number of machines in November and December last on that basis the additional duty proposed under this sub-item would immediately be added, which means that the imported machine would cost about £130 instead of £102. Even if the machines produced at the Sunshine Works are superior to those imported, which is very problematical, it will not be possible for the manufacturers to meet the demand in the coming year, and a duty of 45 per cent., as proposed, will really mean an impost of 60 per cent.



in addition to the natural protection, which is altogether preposterous.

Mr. ATKINSON.—It means an additional £30 or £40 on each machine.

Mr. GREGORY.—Absolutely. It cannot be said that the business of Mr. McKay is not in a prosperous condition, and it has reached its present state of efficiency on lower duties than those now proposed. Very little of this type of machinery comes from Great Britain, and the duty on the general Tariff is what the farmer will have to pay. I move—

That the following words be added to sub-item (A):—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, ad val., British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent."

Mr. ATKINSON (Wilmot) [2.57].—I think the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) should consider the present prices of reapers and binders. I do not think there is, at present, any necessity for imposing any duties, but, of course, we are living under abnormal conditions, which are not likely to prevail for any length of time. Personally, I think these duties should be deferred for a time, in order to see if Australian manufacturers are in a position to produce reapers and binders in sufficient quantities to meet the demand. If Australian manufacturers can produce machines in large quantities, I do not think they would be affected if the duty were deferred. In some of the States reapers and binders are used very extensively, but in Tasmania we cannot largely use harvesters. In certain portions of my electorate a few machines are in use, and I understand they are giving satisfaction. They are chiefly made in Victoria, at the "Sunshine" works. But the bulk of the farmers, especially the small men in Tasmania, for climatic and other reasons, cannot use the harvester. Besides, a great deal of their crop consists of hay and oats, and a reaper and binder suits them very much better than a harvester. I want to see the Australian machine used. The history of the "Sunshine" people, and of other Australian firms, affords good ground for expecting that any difficulties which may present themselves to-day in the manufacture of the

right kind of implement will be overcome. In this instance, seeing that conditions are abnormal, I suggest that the Minister consider whether it would not be wiser to defer the duties for a matter of six months.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [3.2].—I cannot agree with the proposal of the honorable member for Wilmot (Mr. Atkinson). In the past the reaper and binder has been almost exclusively imported; the Australian farmer has had long experience of the foreign make and its local importer. Whether the machines have come from Great Britain or America the farmer has had to pay through the nose for the past forty years. The overseas makers have had a free run, and have heavily exploited the Australian market. If the total sum of the profits made in Australia by foreign manufacturers of these implements could be authoritatively compiled and made known in this Parliament, the figure would prove astounding. The groundless fear expressed by the honorable member for Wilmot is not a new one. I refer to the allegation that if importations of these machines cease, as an outcome of the new Tariff, there will be a serious scarcity, with resultant harm to the Australian farmer. That is an old bogey. As soon as there is a possibility of the local manufacturer coming into competition with the importer of the foreign implement, the printing press throughout the country is set in active motion, and agents and representatives of the imported machines, from one end of the land to the other, diligently spread the tale that if the protective duty is agreed to, the farmer will be unable to secure his necessary machinery. The *Customs Year-Book* shows the following particulars of importations of reapers, binders, and mowers:—1919-20, £69,000; 1918-19, £63,000; 1917-18, £84,000; 1916-17—a little while prior to the introduction of the Tariff—£131,000. The total for the four years shows that £348,951 worth of reapers and binders was imported into Australia. From recent monthly returns supplied to the Customs Department, it is found that from July, 1920, to April, 1921, reapers and binders and mowers to the value of £385,846 were imported; so that importations, in this brief term of ten

months, practically equalled the total of the previous four years.

Mr. GREENE.—Not in numbers of machines; the actual number would be about two-thirds.

Mr. FENTON.—I am speaking of values. I accept the Minister's estimate of the number of machines imported. The facts and figures reveal the cunning of the importer. This huge total has been imported from overseas since the Tariff was first tabled. The importers are trying, as far as possible, to smother the local industry, or prevent it from getting any standing in the community. As for the complaint that if the duty is agreed to there will be a disastrous cessation of importations, whereby the farmer will be stranded, the figures for the ten months which I have just quoted suggest that enough machines have been imported into Australia to supply primary producers for a considerable time to come.

Mr. GIBSON.—Are those machines in bond, or will their importers be required to pay the higher rates of duty? Suppose that these rates are not confirmed, what would be the position then?

Mr. FENTON.—Suppose that this Committee were to wipe out the duties altogether. It would mean that those who had put tens of thousands of pounds into this new Australian industry would lose all, and the infant activity would be killed. And, at the same time, importers would have a free hand; and then the farmer would be made to pay. In the past, Australian manufacturers have had to put up with tactics such as I have just indicated. It was a long time before the Federal Parliament came to their rescue and struck down the strangling clutch of the foreign makers. With the assistance of the Federal Parliament, once more, the local manufacturers will be given a fair chance; and, given that, they are capable of effectively fighting the foreign manufacturers. It is very apparent that there will be a good supply of reapers and binders, and mowers in this country for a considerable time. Consequently the Australian farmer is absolutely safe. There are enough reapers and binders in the Commonwealth to-day to supply the whole of our farmers' requirements during the next two or three years.

Mr. BELL.—From where does the honorable member get that information?

Mr. FENTON.—From an exceptionally reliable source.

Mr. BELL.—From a propagandist source?

Mr. FENTON.—The honorable member may be his own propagandist, but the figures I have quoted are taken from the *Customs Year-book*.

Mr. BELL.—Now the honorable member has given me an answer to my question.

Mr. FENTON.—I merely allowed the honorable member a little tether, and found that he was prepared to level accusations against myself and others which were totally undeserved. If he has any complaint to make in regard to the figures which I have quoted, he should make it to the Customs Department.

Mr. BELL.—The Customs Department cannot tell us the requirements of the farmer for a season.

Mr. FENTON.—In 1916-17, when we garnered a bountiful harvest, reapers and binders to the value of £131,000 more than satisfied the demands of Australia for the whole year. Obviously, therefore, £335,000 worth of these machines will supply our requirements for two years.

Mr. BELL.—The honorable member's figures are quite worthless.

Mr. FENTON.—They are not. I can count the number of votes which will be recorded in favour of the amendment submitted by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), and I cannot conceive that they will number more than eight or nine. What following has he even amongst the members of his own party? The consensus of opinion of this Committee, from the time the Tariff was introduced into this Chamber has been overwhelmingly in favour of the encouragement of Australian production. Having emerged from the storm and stress of a terrible war, all true Australians desire that this country shall be made as self-contained as possible. We possess all the raw materials to enable us to achieve that objective; we have workmen who are second to none in the world from the stand-point of efficiency; and we have also the inventive genius which has supplied not merely our own farmers, but the farmers of other countries with some of the best agricultural implements that are in use to-day. It is idle for any man



to say to the farmer, "Here is a strong machine which will do splendid work for you." He must prove that it is a labour-saving implement, which it will pay the farmer to use. If it will enable the latter to sow and reap his crops at a less cost than he has done hitherto, that is the kind of machine which will improve his position. I cannot understand why certain honorable members who profess to represent the farmers desire to prevent them from obtaining the best locally manufactured article at the lowest possible price.

Mr. GREGORY.—We want them to have the best machinery in the world.

Mr. FENTON.—The honorable member knows that Australia stands second to no country in regard to the manufacture of improved machinery. If the local manufacturer be wiped out, the specialists who are engaged in the laboratories attached to our factories, and who are devoting themselves to such tasks as perfecting, for example, the improved harvesters, will also be wiped out. These men are constantly receiving suggestions from outside sources as to the way in which certain mechanical contrivances may be improved so as to make that machine more effective. Do honorable members of the Country party wish to deny our manufacturers an opportunity of introducing such improvements? We have given to the world some of the best implements which have ever been placed upon the farm, and if we are afforded an opportunity to do so, we shall produce even better machines. If we had manufactured the 6,000 combined harvesters which have been imported into this country, how much cheaper would our factories have been able to turn them out? In such circumstances the overhead charges would certainly have been not more than they are to-day, and our farmers would have been able to purchase these machines cheaper than they can at present.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Massed production should be cheaper.

Mr. FENTON.—It stands to reason that with massed production, assuming that the overhead charges were the same, our manufacturers would be able to manufacture these machines at a cheaper price than that at which they are manufacturing them to-day. I am very sorry that

the Minister is absent from the Chamber just now, because I want to invite his attention to a supplementary duty. Whilst the duties proposed upon reapers and binders in this schedule may be all right so far as the complete machines are concerned, it may be possible for the makers of them to import them in parts, and have those parts assembled in Australia. Consequently, the best thing we can do is not merely to impose duties upon the complete machine, but also to impose a duty upon the various parts of it. This course is absolutely necessary if we are to effectively protect local industry. For instance, the weight of a 6-foot reaper and binder is given in the Massey-Harris price-book as 15 cwt. 3 qrs. Of this total, the metal parts weigh, approximately, 14 cwt. If the machine were imported in parts to be assembled here, the duty on the parts at the rate of 2½d. per lb. would amount to much less than the duty on a complete machine. It will thus be seen that unless departmental precautions are taken, the duty may be evaded by this importation in pieces. I understand that the Minister is proposing that the duty shall apply to machines already assembled.

Mr. GREENE.—The machines need not necessarily be assembled. Nearly the whole of this machinery comes in more or less broken down.

Mr. FENTON.—How is the duty to be applied when a machine is brought in in parts? An importer might bring in three or four cases of parts which, when assembled, would make two complete machines, and the duty levied on those parts would be less than the duty levied on the complete machines.

Mr. GREENE.—If it is a substantially whole machine that is imported in parts the machine rate of duty applies, but spare or duplicate parts come in under the parts duty.

Mr. FENTON.—I see that in respect of parts there is a duty of 1½d. per lb., British, and of 2½d. per lb. under the general Tariff. Does the Minister think that is sufficient?

Mr. GREENE.—I promised the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) that I would move to reduce the duty on

parts to 2d. per lb., as in the case of reaper-threshers.

Mr. FENTON.—If the machines are brought in unassembled—if the parts are imported separately—the duty in respect of the complete machine may be wiped out altogether. The object of the importers is to destroy the local industry. There is no reason why those who at present import parts for reapers and binders should not have those parts made in Australia. It is merely a question of the American manufacturers bringing out the necessary patterns. If that were done, the parts could be produced here in large quantities, and at a reasonable price. One would anticipate that the importers would take a step of this sort in the interests of the farmers who have purchased their machines. I am inclined to think that the cutting down of the duty on parts will lead to a considerable evasion of the duties on the complete machine.

Mr. RILEY.—The importers will bring in the machines in parts instead of complete.

Mr. FENTON.—That is what I fear. I shall, however, leave the matter to the Minister in the hope that he will see that the schedule is so framed that it will give to the manufacturers here true protection, and will prevent any nefarious practices on the part of importers of parts instead of completely assembled machines.

Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports) [3.29].—The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) has dealt with the duty on reapers and binders and on mowers and hay rakes. I can remember mowers being made here long before the introduction of the newer fangled machinery. They were made at Footscray some thirty-five years ago; but the American mower was brought in, and drove out of the Australian market, not only the locally-made article, but that which hitherto had been imported from the Old Country. If these mowers and hay rakes can be manufactured here, why should we not encourage their local production? These importing firms are already looking out for lands whereon to establish factories in Australia, and it is our duty to compel them, if possible, to carry on their work here. In this we ought to be helped even by the farmers,

for it will ultimately prove to their advantage. I know that two firms have already obtained land in Victoria, and that the arrangements for commencing work are nearly completed.

Why is it that the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) will misquote, or exaggerate, the natural protection that exists for our manufacturers? I did not hear the whole of the honorable gentleman's speech, but I think he said there is a natural protection of 61 per cent. on the mower and 53 per cent. on the hay rake.

Mr. GREGORY.—With a deduction of 12 per cent. for the assembling.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The following table shows the landed cost and other particulars of a 4-ft. 6-in. mower in June of this year:—

	£	s.	d.
Invoice cost, \$77.00 converted at \$4 to £1	19	5	0
Ocean freight, 32 cubic feet at 67s. 6d. per ton	2	14	0
Bank exchange	0	4	0
Insurance	0	2	6
Entry, clearing, and cabling	0	0	6
Wharfage and stacking	0	6	9
Cartage	0	3	0
	22	15	9
Duty, 10 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> , on £19 5s.	2	2	3
	24	18	0
Invoice price	19	5	0
Total charges (except duty)	3	10	9
Natural protection—18 per cent.			

Mr. GREGORY.—What are you working on—the manufacturing invoice price or the selling price?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I am working on the imported price of the article—the price on which duty is paid.

Mr. GREGORY.—That is mostly the manufacturing cost, and not the price of the machine, which is increased considerably here.

Mr. MATHEWS.—How can we ascertain the natural protection otherwise than by calculating the cost of bringing the article to Australia? What afterwards takes place in Australia has nothing to do with the natural protection.

Mr. GREGORY.—I worked my figures out on the manufacturing price.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Perhaps the honorable member is making a mistake such as he admits having made in regard to



the assembling. I have also the following figures in regard to the landed cost of a 9-ft. hay rake this month:—

	£	s.	d.
Invoice, cost, \$44.00 converted at \$4 to the £1	11	0	0
Ocean freight, 17½ cubic feet at 67s. 6d. per ton	1	10	0
Bank exchange	0	2	4
Insurance	0	2	8
Entry, clearing, and cabling	0	0	6
Wharfage and stacking	0	3	0
Cartage	0	1	6
	13	0	0
Duty, 10 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i> , on £11	1	4	2
	14	4	2

Invoice price	11	0	0
Total charges (except duty)	2	0	0
Natural protection—18 per cent.			

When the honorable member talks about natural protection he ought to tell us what is covered by the term, so that his arguments may be refuted, if he takes into account anything but the natural charges between the country of origin and Australia.

Mr. GREGORY.—I have specific cases of two machines, with full particulars of the cost of importation.

Mr. MATHEWS.—It is remarkable that every time the honorable member deals with the question of natural protection he overstates the case. In the case of the hay rake the freight would have to be £6 10s., and, with the mower, £12 10s., to arrive at the figures he gave us. Is the honorable member not quite as desirous as we on this side are of compelling those American firms to manufacture in Australia if possible?

Mr. GREGORY.—I think we ought to have a certain protective duty. I do not see why those firms should be allowed to carry on here their business in another country without paying any portion of our cost of government. I wish, however, to see competition.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Does the honorable member not think that there is enough competition in Australia? Does he wish to hold up the foreign manufacturer as a menace against our own manufacturer? Does he not think that we can, by scientific laws, provide for sufficient competition here?

Mr. GREGORY.—Scientific laws? Good gracious!

Mr. MATHEWS.—If the honorable member thinks otherwise, then he must admit, with me and those of my way of political thinking, that our present economic system is useless.

Mr. GREGORY.—The more the interference, the worse things get!

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member has, certainly, the most peculiar ideas. He wishes to have the foreign manufacturer as a menace against the manufacturer here—he can see no other method of meeting the case.

Mr. GREGORY.—Is not the natural protection, with a 15 per cent. duty, sufficient, considering that our workers are as good, and as intelligent, as any in the world?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I am merely trying to show what the honorable member's contention really is. He must know that natural protection is useless where dumping is resorted to; if he cannot see that that is so, it is not my fault. However, I know it is useless to try to convince the honorable member, who has a "bee in his bonnet"; and I, perhaps, should not have spoken were it not that it might subsequently be said that his statements had gone unrefuted.

Mr. BELL (Darwin) [3.38].—The fears that have been expressed of the consequences of high duties on these machines are very reasonable, and are shared by the farmers of Australia. An extraordinary high duty on reapers and binders will have the effect of limiting the number of machines available for the coming season. In spite of the figures quoted by the honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton), there are good grounds for the fears in this connexion; indeed, I consider his figures absolutely worthless. It is idle for the honorable member to attempt to show that, because there was an increase in the number of machines imported last year, there will be a surplus available for next season. Obviously that increased importation was to meet the demand occasioned by an extraordinarily good season. It must be remembered that in the bad seasons, such as that of 1915-16, when, at the same time, the prices of the machines were high, farmers renovated their old machines, and kept going in the hope of better times. That really was the cause of the high demand for machines last year. That alone was the reason for

the increase in imports. Another aspect of this case, which is possibly more dangerous than the fear of a shortage of supplies, is the increase in the price of the reaper and binder. Such an increase is absolutely assured if we add 45 per cent. to the existing duty, and we are actually adding 45 per cent., because up to this year the reaper and binder has been free. In spite of their oft-repeated statement that an increased duty does not mean an increased price, our high Protectionist friends opposite will find it very difficult to convince the farmer that that is the case, because the farmer, although mute, is not lacking in intelligence. Some of our friends who preach the doctrine of "the higher the duty the cheaper the article" seem to think they are talking to school boys or to unthinking people. If it were the case, there would be no reason for asking for an increase in the Tariff. If the reaper and binder manufactured in Australia to-day can be sold at £98, and its makers ask for a Protection of 40 per cent. or 45 per cent., obviously that increased Protection will be of no use whatever to them, unless it is to give them an increase in the price at which they sell their machines. No matter how honorable members opposite may argue, that alone, in effect, is the reason why the local manufacturers desire increased Protection, so far as I can judge. I fully realize that it is of no use to debate the question at length. The Committee has made up its mind on every item; and the honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) is quite correct in predicting that probably not more than eight or nine members will vote for the amendment proposed by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). Still, those represent the numbers in this Chamber who are willing to give the farmer the consideration and support to which he is certainly entitled. The majority of honorable members are, of course, concerned for the manufacturer, and city interests generally. Although I realize that we shall be fighting a forlorn hope if we continue to battle for reasonable Protection, and nothing more, for the local manufacturer—because 40 per cent. is an unreasonable Protection for him to demand—I intend to support the amendment if it goes to a

division. I am assured that a further amendment will be moved on the next item. I hope the Minister, when dealing with reapers and binders, in particular, will be prepared to listen to the suggestion of the honorable member for Wilmot (Mr. Atkinson) that it may be advisable to defer the duty lest the local manufacturer should not be able to supply the demands of Australia in the coming season.

**MR. GIBSON** (Corangamite) [3.45].—I recognise, with other honorable members of the Country party who are endeavouring to do something in the interests of the primary producer, that our efforts are hopeless, and only a waste of time; but I fear that honorable members generally are not looking at the serious impost which they are placing on the agricultural industry. The decline that has been taking place since 1913 is absolutely astounding. The *Sydney Bulletin* last week, in an article on "The Burdened Farmer," showed that in 1900 there were 67,136 people actively engaged in agriculture in New South Wales. In 1907 there were 69,163, which, the *Bulletin* remarked, was wretchedly poor progress, but still progress. The paper adds that that was shortly before the "heroic loan and settlement boom" began. In 1919, when the latest estimate was published, it was possible to trace only 50,881 of these agriculturists. "If the same rate of decline takes place for the next thirty-one years," says the *Bulletin*, "there will not be a solitary agriculturist remaining in New South Wales."

**MR. WATKINS.**—Does the *Bulletin* show that there were that many less, or that so many had retired on their wealth?

**MR. GIBSON.**—It shows that the industry had declined, and that so many had actually gone out of farming. The honorable member knows what was said by the deputation which waited on the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) the other day on behalf of certain farmers in New South Wales. Those farmers approached their own State Government last year and obtained a loan of £1,000,000 to carry on. The honorable member knows also that they have had five of the worst years ever known in the history of New South Wales. The *Bulletin's* figures show



that there has been a loss of farmers in New South Wales, in twelve years, to the number of 18,282.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Does the *Bulletin* give the reason why they are going off the land? Does it ascribe this to the Protective policy?

Mr. GIBSON.—It is well worth the honorable member's while to read the whole article, which shows the facts regarding the decline of agriculture in his own State.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—How do you connect that with the Tariff?

Mr. GIBSON.—I am showing that the Committee is placing on the farmer additional imposts that will put him out of production altogether.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The *Bulletin* will not agree with you in that contention.

Mr. GIBSON.—The honorable member, like other representatives of New South Wales, is out for the highest possible duties, in order to build a prohibitive wall around Australia.

Mr. WATKINS.—We learned that from the Victorians.

Mr. GIBSON.—At one time, honorable members opposite took the opposite view of the fiscal question. Why they have turned their fiscal beliefs upside down is beyond my knowledge. All those honorable members opposite who were Free Traders at one time are Protectionists to-day. In 1914-15, 7,372,000 acres were under cultivation in Australia. Then followed the first years of the war, when we had 9,000,000 acres and up to 12,000,000 acres under crop. Those were the record years for Australia, but in the post-war years there has been a decline, until last year we put only 6,379,000 acres under crop. By increasing these duties the Committee is going to make the position worse.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That was the rotten management of the Wheat Pool in New South Wales under the Government which the honorable member supports.

Mr. GIBSON.—That remark might apply to New South Wales, but the management of the Wheat Pool in Victoria was excellent. At the present time, the Victorian Government are placing 10,000 soldiers on the land. The New South Wales Government are also plac-

ing many men on the land. The duties alone, on the cheapest set of agricultural machinery that these men can get, amount to £130. Therefore, honorable members are placing on every man who is being put on the land a tax of £130. The honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) has a son who is going on the land to grow wheat. That young man will have to put his hand in his pocket to the extent of £130 to meet the extra charge on his machinery over and above what he would have to pay if the articles could be obtained at the old rates. That calculation does not take into account the extra money that will be added to the duties by the commercial man to represent his profits and money out of pocket. The Minister, speaking of reapers and binders, said that the life of a binder was 1,000 acres.

Mr. GREENE.—I did not say it was 1,000 acres. I merely took that as a supposition.

Mr. GIBSON.—The Minister's figures are correct, although a binder might give a little more service than that with good management and care.

Mr. RODGERS.—The life will depend on whether you cut that area in a few years or many.

Mr. GIBSON.—If the farmer looks after his machine, he will get more life out of it.

Mr. RODGERS.—If he cut 500 acres in two years, its life would be more than if he cut 1,000 acres in one year.

Mr. GIBSON.—The Minister admits that the life of the machine is in the vicinity of 1,000 acres of hay, and, therefore, this duty is equivalent to an impost of 9d. per acre for all time on every acre of land under hay. It is really more than the farmer's municipal rates.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—But we have been told that the duty will make the machines cheaper.

Mr. GIBSON.—I am aware that the Minister is speaking ironically. He knows perfectly well that the duty goes on at the other end. I hope that the new reaper and binder which is to be manufactured by H. V. McKay will be just as pronounced a success as the harvester manufactured at the Sunshine works. I admit that H. V. McKay has built up the finest manufacturing business in Australia, and

I am satisfied that if the Australian reaper and binder proves to be as good as the harvester turned out at Sunshine, as well as by Robinson and Company and one or two other manufacturers, competition from American manufacturers need not be feared. The Australian machines stand alone. Very few farmers care to buy a stripper-harvester of American make, and I repeat that if the McKay reaper and binder is as good as the Australian harvester, this duty will not be required to protect the industry. And are we going to place this tax of 9d. per acre on every acre of hay that is cut in Australia for the sake of one industry? It is absolutely unfair, and in sub-item B I intend to move that the duty be £10, £12, and £15. I trust that the Committee will give consideration to the interests of the wheatgrower, who will be vitally affected by this duty. Our wheat is worth £50,000,000 this year, and, as the Treasurer said the other day, it is going to save the finances of the Commonwealth. It is practically the only taxable commodity that the farmer has, and, unfortunately, the tax will go into the pockets of the manufacturer. I challenge the statement made by the honorable member for Martbyrnong (Mr. Fenton) that if the duty is not imposed, the primary producers of this country will be at the mercy of the importers. For many years our farmers have been able to get their reapers and binders at £38, £40, and £41, but it appears that, from now onwards, they will be called upon to pay anything from £98 to £105, and probably more. I intend to support the amendment moved by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory). I remind the Committee that duplicates represent a very important item to the farmer because he is replacing parts of his machine from time to time. There are scores of old out-of-date machines in use throughout Australia. The machines are not now being imported, but the parts are coming in and are dutiable. In order to enable the farmers to keep the machines going a little time longer, I think the duty on these parts should be at the same rate as the old machine itself.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY (Hume). [3.55].—I cannot allow the statement made by the honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Gibson) to go unchal-

lenged. I object to the contention of honorable members in the Corner that they alone represent the views of the primary producer, although I realize the truth of the saying that if you repeat a statement often enough, although it may be fallacious to the last degree, eventually you make yourself believe there is something in it. The honorable member for Corangamite is quite justified in stating his point of view if he really believes what he is saying; but he has no right to assume that he is also putting the views of the man on the land.

Mr. GIBSON.—I think I am.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member has a perfect right to think that way if he likes, but I conscientiously believe otherwise, and so I am not going to accept his statements. He said something about the condition of agriculture in New South Wales in recent years. I remind him that New South Wales has passed through an unprecedented drought, and that, with the exception of last season, the interests of the farmers in that State suffered very much owing to mismanagement of the Wheat Pools. This, I submit, caused many of them to go out of agriculture. I object to the honorable member quoting from the *Sydney Bulletin*, and allowing honorable members to believe that the *Bulletin* supports his contention as to the reason for this decline in agriculture. It would have been much fairer had the honorable member read the whole of the extract. He would then have shown that the majority of the farmers who had given up wheat-growing had merely changed this form of occupation on the land for another. The honorable member knows that the policy of the *Bulletin* is to encourage the establishment of Australian industries, and that it describes his attitude on this subject as a "hideous superstition," to use its own words.

Mr. GIBSON.—And it points to a decline in the biggest industry in Australia.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The point is that the honorable member gave us the impression that the *Bulletin* was with him in contending that in building up our secondary industries, we were driving the agriculturist off the land.

Mr. GIBSON.—I never suggested that at all.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Why did the honorable member quote it then?



Mr. GIBSON.—To show the decline in agriculture.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—But how could the honorable member expect to connect that newspaper extract with this discussion on the Tariff? I claim to know something about the conditions of the wheat-grower in New South Wales, and I repeat that the temporary decline in wheat-growing is due largely to the gross mismanagement of the Wheat Pools in New South Wales, but that the farmers there ceased wheat production for the time being only to take up some other rural occupation.

Mr. GIBSON.—You say that the action of the Government has driven men off the land in New South Wales, and I say that the action of the Government in this matter is going to have the same effect.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member is only assuming that something like that will happen. He knows that the Tariff had nothing to do with driving farmers off the land.

Mr. GIBSON.—I never suggested anything of the kind.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I am glad to have that admission. Why did the honorable member quote the *Bulletin*?

Mr. GIBSON.—Simply to show the decline of agriculture in Australia?

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—For the first time in five years the Wheat Pool in New South Wales has been properly managed, and as a result of that management and a good season the last yield, about 60,000,000 bushels, was the best for many years. That fact is a complete answer to the statement of the honorable member that men are going off the land. If I believed that the imposition of these duties would have a detrimental effect upon the man on the land, I would be opposed to them. But I believe it to be in the interests of the farmer to establish local manufacturing industries and create a better local market. The honorable member for Corangamite, instead of reading matter that was irrelevant, should have endeavoured to answer my argument of last night in regard to reapers and binders. On 1st September, 1920, Massey-Harris and Company quoted in their own price-list the 6-foot reaper and binder for delivery in 1921 at £130. Local firms started to manu-

facture the same machine, and as soon as Massey-Harris and Company found themselves confronted with local competition they reduced their price by £24. Local industry meant a gain of £24 per machine to the primary producers, and I am endeavouring to retain that advantage for them. When the honorable member for Corangamite was on his feet he made no endeavour to answer that statement.

Mr. GREGORY.—I explained it fully last night.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—There is no satisfactory explanation of it. Those honorable members in the Corner who say that the supporters of these duties are opposed to the interests of the man on the land, are contradicted by the whole history of fiscalism. The Minister (Mr. Greene) last night advanced an argument which honorable members in the corner did not attempt to refute. Indeed, the figures he quoted from actual price lists were unanswerable. It must be remembered that the Minister represents one of the largest primary producing electorates in Australia. I, too, represent a country constituency which is second to none of the electorates represented by members of the Country party. Government supporters and members of the Opposition represent more country electorates than do the honorable members in the corner, who are not unanimous on this question of reduced duties. Does the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett) agree with the attitude adopted by his Deputy Leader (Mr. Gregory)? I do not think he does. Last night I quoted a speech made by the honorable member when he was contesting the Maribyrnong seat, and I could employ no better argument to prove how illogical is the attitude taken up by some of the members of his party. Those honorable members who are opposed to these duties have a perfect right to express their own views, but they have no right to claim that they are speaking for the primary producers. Very serious consequences may follow the alteration of the duty on parts of machines. Last night the Minister agreed to an alteration of duty on some parts; but I hope he will not do that again.

Mr. GREENE.—I have agreed to do so.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I am sorry to hear that. What is the good of giving with one hand and taking away with the other?

Mr. GREENE.—It will not have that effect, as I shall show.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I am informed that of the total weight of 15 cwt. 3 qrs. in a reaper and binder the metal parts weigh 14 cwt. If the machine were imported in parts to be assembled in Australia, and the duty on the parts were 2½d. per lb., the total paid would be less than the duty collected on the complete machine. If that were so, the effects would be serious, unless departmental precautions were taken to see that the duty was not evaded by the importation of machinery in pieces.

Mr. GREENE.—I shall deal with that.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—I see no advantage in imposing a duty on the completed article and taking it off the parts. Of course, instructions may be given by the Department to adjust the duties.

Mr. BELL.—Make the poor farmer buy a new machine every year.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That sort of talk does not strengthen a bad case. The farmers are too intelligent to be influenced by that talk, and they do not thank anybody for referring to them as the "poor farmers." A fallacy such as is preached on the question of a Tariff by a few honorable members of the Corner, although repeated a thousand times, never becomes a truth.

Mr. GIBSON.—I intend to move for a duty of £15 on every binder imported.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—This is what the *Bulletin* says about the attitude of the honorable member and his party towards the Tariff:—

Gibson asked for a duty of 6s. per cwt. on foreign-grown onions and got it. He is a member of the Country party, and the public expect to hear less in future from the disgruntled minority of his colleagues about the iniquities of the Tariff. A Tariff which can save a body of farmers from the extinction to which Free Trade would inevitably condemn them, deserves something better than the cheap gibes of Prowse and Gregory. In truth, the fiscal policy of the Commonwealth is a policy for the producer. It has saved him in the past from being exploited by the makers of foreign machinery and implements, it is saving him at present from the operations of cheap labour competitors and dumpers—and there would be a ruinous amount of dumping in these distress-

ful times if the Tariff didn't prevent it—and it is providing him all the time with the best and safest of all markets, a home market. The war and the post-war slump have shown how utterly impossible it is for Australia to continue its old, heedless, and shiftless dependence on foreign markets.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Fleming).—I am afraid that that has nothing to do with the item under discussion.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—At any rate, I commend the passage to the perusal of the honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Gibson). When he quotes from the *Bulletin*, he should read all that appears therein, and not endeavour to make the Committee believe that that publication supports him in a policy which is detrimental to the primary producers, as well as to the secondary producers and the people at large.

Mr. GIBSON.—The official organ of the Labour party advocates the boycotting of our butter, and objects to immigrants coming to this country to give us the local market which you say you wish our farmers to have.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The members of the Labour party, on an occasion which my honorable friend will remember, were ready to give our producers of butter a higher price than those in the Corner party would agree to. That statement can be proved by reference to *Hansard*. There is no agricultural implement industry in my electorate, so that I have no selfish interest to serve in advocating a protective policy. All the evidence that I can collect shows that where there is protection of secondary industries and local competition, the primary producer fares better than where there is no local competition. The farmers of New Zealand and the Argentine, under Free Trade, are infinitely worse off than those of Australia. It is worthy of notice that only two or three members of the Corner party are supporting its Deputy Leader in this matter.

Mr. GREGORY.—I had a strong letter from Albury a few days ago.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Yes; and the honorable member deserved it. The honorable member, if he went to Albury, would find that a majority of the electors there would not accept his reasoning on this matter.



Mr. GIBSON.—Some of the honorable members of the Labour party, if here, would vote with us, as they have done before. That is not a united party.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The honorable member cannot get even the members of his own party to vote with him. There are in the Labour party as many representatives of country districts as are to be found in the Country party.

Mr. CHARLTON.—And the people of Albury always supported a former honorable member for Hume (Sir William Lyne), although he was the strongest Protectionist in the House.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Yes; as the honorable member states, one of my predecessors, Sir William Lyne, was the strongest Protectionist in the House. I do not think that a majority of the electors of any district in Australia believe that the destruction of industries will benefit the primary producers, or any one else. It is to the advantage of a young country like this to have industries. Honorable members who support proposals like that of the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) will not come into the open and say, "I believe in Free Trade," because they know that Free Trade is dead, and that no large number of electors is in favour of that policy; they say, "We do not want high duties. We desire moderate protection."

Mr. GIBSON.—Adequate protection.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—To prove that moderate protection is a good thing, they draw attention to the alleged benefits that the producers of Free Trade countries are supposed to enjoy.

Mr. GREGORY.—The honorable member complains of the existence of monopolies, and then does his best to build them up.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—What utter nonsense! As I have already stated a dozen times since the Tariff debate began, if the Labour party were in power, we should apply the New Protection; but, not being in power, we have to choose between the Old Protection and Free Trade. Under Free Trade, monopolies are built up outside the country; and if there be any danger of monopolies, I prefer to have them in this country where we can control them, rather than overseas and beyond our control. I rose, not to go over the figures

that I have already given, but to challenge the statement of the honorable member for Corangamite, and show that it was not fair for him, in putting his case, to claim that his views were those of the men on the land.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.21].—I wish to deal first with what has been said by the honorable members for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) and Hume (Mr. Parker Moloney) about the importation of parts. They contend that machines may be imported in parts, and that thus the intention of the Tariff will be frustrated. That, however, will not occur. On page 325 of the *Official Tariff Guide* 1908-11, there is to be found this interpretation of parts, which has been duly gazetted, and, under the Customs Act, is, therefore, the law of the land:—

In pursuance of the powers conferred on me by the Customs Tariff 1908-11, I hereby direct that parts of any article, machine, or appliance shall, although specifically or generically provided for in the Tariff as parts, if imported with any such article, machine, or appliance in a complete or substantially complete state, be classifiable under the Tariff item applicable to such article, machine, or appliance. Articles, machines, and appliances shipped in an un-assembled condition, ready, or practically ready, for assembling, shall be treated as though actually assembled.

When all the parts that make up a machine are imported, they are treated for duty as if they were assembled; but when parts are imported separately, as certain wearing parts are imported, they are dutiable as parts. It would be impossible to evade taxation by importing parts as parts and then assembling them.

Mr. CHARLTON.—What is to prevent that from being done?

Mr. GREENE.—It could not be done to any extent without the Customs officials becoming aware of it. Item 167 of the Tariff, dealing with parts of reaper threshers, has been in the Tariff since 1908-11. The machines are dutiable under another item, and the parts pay a special rate. It has never been suggested that the law is evaded, although these machines are always imported in parts, that is, un-assembled.

Mr. GREGORY.—If what is feared were being done, the Department would promptly take action.

Mr. GREENE.—Importers have to declare the nature of the goods they import, and if they imported as parts what were not properly dutiable as parts, they would be liable to severe penalties, and would be prosecuted by the Department. The experience of the Department indicates that there is no fear whatever that the duty will be evaded by these machines being imported in parts.

Mr. GREGORY.—That is an evasion I had no desire to assist when I made the suggestion I put forward last night.

Mr. GREENE.—I am quite sure the honorable member did not have it in mind. Last night, the honorable member called me to task for not having consulted the Board of Trade in regard to these matters, but this is one question upon which that Board was consulted. The origin of the industry affected by this item lay in certain negotiations which took place between the Minister for Repatriation and the Australian agricultural implement makers, with the idea of creating work in special industries for returned soldiers. A proposal to this end was submitted to the Board of Trade, which considered it and made a unanimous recommendation upon it, which we have incorporated in the Tariff. Therefore, although I feel strongly inclined to meet the request of the honorable member for Dampier, I am in this difficulty, that I feel that I am obliged to give expression in the Tariff to the definite undertaking arrived at as a result of these negotiations. I have never held that these duties will be passed on to the farmer. The evidence we have had is the clearest indication possible that they are not passed on. Before this particular duty came into operation, the importing firms had raised their price to £98 in Australia, in New Zealand, and in Great Britain, where no duty is imposed upon them, to the farmer the price is £97 and £92 10s. respectively. The Australian manufacturer is now supplying these implements at his works for £95. It is quite evident, therefore, that the duty is not being passed on to the farmer.

Mr. GREGORY.—The importers assert that, if they are called upon to pay the *ad valorem* duty of 45 per cent., that price will be increased to £130.

Mr. GREENE.—It will be some time before the importers are obliged to fall back upon further importations, because they have taken all sorts of care to have a sufficient quantity on hand. The honorable member for Matibyrnong (Mr. Fenton) has already informed the Committee that during the last ten months as great a value of these machines have been imported as were imported during the preceding three years.

Mr. GIBSON.—The honorable member quoted values, but not the actual number of machines. The invoice price of these machines during the last ten months would be nearly double what they cost prior to that.

Mr. GREENE.—We all know that the price of these machines has been going up steadily for years past. The total value of importations during the years 1916-20 was £349,000, whereas during the last ten months the value of the machines imported was £336,000. Even allowing that the price has doubled—and I doubt whether, on the average, that is the case—as many machines have been imported in the last ten months as were imported in about two years prior to that period. These facts indicate quite clearly that the importers have already provided their full requirements for the ensuing harvest, and that these machines are already in Australia. In any case, the history of the agricultural implement industry in Australia shows that the duties have not been passed on to the farmers, and that the importing firms, in almost every case, have had to take a smaller profit because of the fact that it was impossible for them to stand up against the competition of the local manufacturers if they attempted to pass the duty on. The statement of the honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Gibson) that these duties represent a charge of about 9d. per acre on the farming industry is very wide of the mark, and cannot possibly be substantiated. So far from the duties being passed on, the reverse is the case. The local manufacturer is turning out these machines at £95, as against £97 or £98, to which the importing firms had raised the price before the duty became operative. Therefore, the local manufacturer is saving the Australian farmer from some of the



charges which would have been imposed on him if there had been no local manufacture. In view of the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Trade, and the definite undertakings entered into, if this industry were established, with a view to employing, as it is employing, a large number of returned soldiers, the Government must stand by what has been done, whether it is right or wrong. I am not saying that it is wrong. Therefore, although I did feel inclined to meet the honorable member, but not to go to the length the honorable member for Dampier has suggested in reducing this duty, I feel that the Government are obliged to stand by the undertaking given which for the moment I had overlooked.

**Mr. GREGORY (Dampier)** [4.38].—I am sorry that the returned soldier has been brought into this question, but as he has been brought in, I merely wish to say that an enormous number of returned soldiers have been put on the land, and in spite of the Minister's fantastic predictions, they will be called upon to pay this duty.

Amendment negatived.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) proposed—

That the item be amended by adding the following to sub-item (b):—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate and general, 2d."

**Mr. MATHEWS (Melbourne Ports)** [4.40].—This amendment which, apparently, the Minister is making in accordance with his promise to the honorable member for Dampier (**Mr. Gregory**), will undo in connexion with this industry everything carried out by the Government in the negotiations referred to by the Minister. Of course, the Minister explains that he will see that these machines do not come in as parts, but he will be giving his officials a particularly arduous task to perform. Furthermore, I am quite certain that the importers will growl that they are being imposed upon if they are charged full duty upon parts which, when assembled, will form portions of a full machine. Under this proposal the assemblers of the parts will be able to import at reduced rates which will enable such firms as the Massey-Harris Company, which are the biggest sweaters in Australia, to underpay their

workers. The Minister for Trade and Customs (**Mr. Greene**) has handed the assemblers over to the tender mercies of the Massey-Harris Company and the International Harvester Company, and they will now have an opportunity of improving their position. I suppose pressure has been brought to bear upon the Minister, and that is why he has shown such weakness. We on this side have not had any assistance from the supporters of the Government, or the members of the Country party, and it appears that some honorable members are making preparations for the next election. If the remaining items in the Tariff are to be dealt with in this way, we are not likely to get much assistance from the supporters of the Government who are supposed to be strong Protectionists.

**Mr. GREENE**.—To what is the honorable member objecting?

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—To lower duties on parts. The Minister knows that reduced duties will enable importers to take advantage of local manufacturers.

**Mr. GREENE**.—I am perfectly satisfied that they cannot get any advantage.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—Will the Minister say that if parts were admitted free, the importers would not derive benefit?

**Mr. GREENE**.—They would get a slight advantage. They are really not getting any benefit because it is an alternative rate.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—The Minister knows that the owner of a machine is in a precarious position if he cannot obtain the necessary parts at a reasonable price.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—Would the honorable member favour the prohibition of importations to compel farmers to use the locally manufactured machine?

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—That would be real Protection. Farmers could, I suppose, secure their requirements by purchasing machines outright, and thus securing parts at a reasonable price. I know it is useless hammering away on this matter when the supporters of the Government and the members of the Country party are united, but I shall expect more assistance from the Government supporters in the future.

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND (Illawarra)** [4.44].—The honorable member for Melbourne Ports (**Mr. Mathews**) seems to think that the best support one can give to a Tariff is to delay it. He would be rendering greater assistance if he took up

less time so that we could get on with the work before us.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 172—

Mangles, clothes wringers, and clothes washing machines, for household use, ad val., British, 12½ per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 25 per cent.

**Mr. RILEY** (South Sydney) [4.45].—Will the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) inform the Committee what Australian industry will be encouraged if the duties proposed under this item are imposed? At present, we have not any factories manufacturing mangles, clothes-wringers, clothes washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and other such articles required for household use, and if it is our desire that the arduous work of women should be lessened, these machines should be admitted either free of duty, or at a very low rate. I do not know of any factory in the Commonwealth manufacturing the machines enumerated in this item.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—Was it not worse to impose a duty on sewing machines?

**Mr. RILEY**.—Sewing machines should be made in Australia. What benefit is likely to be derived by imposing duties on the machines mentioned? These necessary machines should be made available at the lowest possible price, and, as they are not manufactured in the Commonwealth, the imposition of duties is altogether unnecessary.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.47].—I have been informed that these machines are being manufactured in Australia. The duty on importations from the United Kingdom is the same as it has been for a number of years, and the general rate has been increased by 5 per cent. It is a low rate, and as there is a certain amount of manufacture being carried on in the Commonwealth I ask the Committee to agree to the item.

Item agreed to.

Item 173—

(A) Weighing machines, including computing weighing machines; weighbridges; scales and balances, n.e.i., including computing scales and balances; tanners' measuring machines; chemists' counter scales; spring balances and steelyards; weights n.e.i.; cash registers; combined bagging, weighing, and sewing machines, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

(B) Balances, viz., analytical and assay, sensitive to less than a ½ milligram, including weights therefor, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.48].—I move—

That the item be amended by leaving out the words "cash registers."

I mentioned this matter last night, and said that cash registers would be included under another item.

**Mr. MATHEWS** (Melbourne Ports) [4.49].—I do not think the mechanical portion of cash registers is so complicated that they cannot be manufactured in Australia. Under an Act of Parliament it has been provided that if manufacturers do not commence to produce locally within a certain period we can undertake the manufacture, notwithstanding the existence of patent rights. The other day I saw a cash register quoted at £110, and I do not suppose its actual value, including patent rights, was more than £20. These machines are made up from stamped parts, and as the manufacture of a complete machine is a simple process, we should compel firms to produce them in Australia. The prices at present charged are so high that, irrespective of any duties that may be imposed, the sellers could not possibly ask for more.

**Mr. WEST** (East Sydney) [4.50].—Is it the intention of the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) to place computing scales and balances in the same category as cash registers? I have been informed that these machines are used solely in retail establishments, and that it would not pay manufacturers to make computing scales and balances unless they were producing them on a large scale. I understand that their manufacture was undertaken a few years ago, but, owing to the small number of machines required, the work was unprofitable.

**Mr. GREENE**.—What does the honorable member suggest?

**Mr. WEST**.—I wish the Minister to place computing scales and balances on the free list, as they are not manufactured in Australia, and their exclusion from this item would not affect the Australian scale-making industry. An English firm of scale makers is established in Sydney, and is manufacturing weighing machines, but not of the type referred to.



Mr. GREENE.—What do these machines do besides indicating the weight and possibly the price?

Mr. WEST.—That is all they do. I have received requests from Adelaide and Sydney to bring this matter under the notice of the Minister.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.55].—If honorable members will turn to item 169, they will see that there is a line, "Adding and computing machines and all attachments," and that these are admitted "free, 5 per cent. and 10 per cent." Computing weighing machines, such as are indicated in the item under discussion, are a different type of machine altogether, and one which has been made both in Sydney and in Brisbane. The same remark applies to the computing scales and balances. That is why those lines are set out under item 173. The Department took out the adding and computing machines, which are highly technical inventions, and are not, and cannot be, made here, and made them duty free; and then it grouped these other machines under the item now being discussed.

Mr. WEST.—In the circumstances, I will not proceed further with my proposed amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Mr. GREGORY.—I draw attention to the lack of a quorum. [*Quorum formed.*]

Item 174—

Machines, machine tools and appliances, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, ad. val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [4.58].—I desire to draw attention to a most extraordinary innovation in the present Tariff. This item contains verbiage which is quite new, and involves a most important and sinister change in departmental procedure. In the past, the Minister for Trade and Customs has had power to place "machine tools and appliances, as prescribed by departmental by-laws," under the free list, or 10 per cent. general list. There has now been added the word "Machines."

Mr. GREENE.—The old item read, "Machine tools" only. The item now is, "Machines, machine tools and appliances."

Mr. GREGORY.—That is so. The Minister told the Committee the other

night that he would even go so far as to designate a tram rail as an appliance for a machine. If nothing has quite convinced me hitherto that this Tariff emanated from the Prime Minister himself, I am emphatically converted to that belief by this present proof. It is the sort of business which one would anticipate—knowing the tricks of the Prime Minister, and the methods he usually adopts.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—On a point of order, is the honorable member for Dampier in order, first in refusing to accept the assurance of the Minister for Trade and Customs to the contrary, and, secondly, in describing the actions of the Minister as being due to the tricks of the Prime Minister?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—(Mr. Atkinson).—I did not hear the honorable member use either phrase; but, if he did so, I must ask him to withdraw.

Mr. GREGORY.—I am not bound to accept any assurance which the Minister may feel inclined to give. He can utter any statement he likes. I am not under compulsion to accept it. I did not say that I would not accept the Minister's assurance. I did not hear him give it, as a matter of fact.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I think it is a parliamentary rule to accept any such assurance.

Mr. MATHEWS.—There are other ways of calling a man a liar than the indirect method just employed.

Mr. GREGORY.—Yes; quite so. Moreover, I know that Cabinet dealt with the Tariff. I am quite satisfied that the introduction of the objectionable phrase in this item has been for the purpose of enabling the Minister to use political influence. That naturally appeals to those honorable members who feel that they can always do something for their constituents by getting the ear of the Minister and begging for personal favours. That is the way in which certain lucky people can get a line of machinery which they may require placed by the Minister under a "duty-free" item. This objectionable phrase, I repeat, is entirely new. Item 175 of the 1914 Tariff says:—

Any dutiable machinery, or machine tool, or any part thereof specified in any proclamation issued by the Governor-General in pursuance

of a joint address passed on the motion of Ministers by both Houses of the Parliament, stating that such machinery, machine tool, or part cannot be reasonably manufactured within the Commonwealth, and that it should be admitted free; British, free; general, 10 per cent.

That is the procedure which has hitherto been followed. The Minister has had no power to declare that various lines of machinery, upon which this Parliament at one time or another had fixed duties, should be allowed to enter the Commonwealth free. I have had a list prepared of the machines which have been admitted duty free since March of 1920. It will be said, of course, that since these various lines were not being manufactured, or could not be made, in Australia, it was only right that they should be admitted duty free; but it is only the manufacturer who gets the concession. Anyhow, they include the following:—

Machines for wrapping confectionery.

Paper finishing, cutting, and folding.

Rollers for flour mills.

Shell forging presses.

Brazing and steaming machines and all component parts thereof except brushware and leatherware for use in manufacture of yarns (for use in the manufacture of textiles) and textiles.

Evaporators for use in production of alkali.

Machines for affixing to wheels rubber carriage tyres having an internal wire or wires.

Machines for close jointing rubber carriage tyres having an internal wire or wires after attachment to tyre.

Swaging machines for tube making.

Electrodes of graphite for use in the production of metals, sulphur, chemicals, and lead sulphate.

Photographic developing, washing and toning machines.

Photographic exposing, typewriting, and cutting machine (automatic).

Weaving machines for manufacturing reed or basket work from cordage made of paper.

Woodworking—bobbin and spool barrel boring and reaming machine, bobbin and spool barrel turning lathes.

Barbed wire making machine.

With respect to the last-mentioned item, a Western Australian gentleman some time ago imported one of these machines. He subsequently told me he had been compelled to pay duty at the rate of 45 per cent. I advised him that, under instructions issued by the Minister, the machine was being admitted free. He thereupon made representations to the Customs Department, and eventually secured a rebate of the amount of duty which he had been called upon to pay.

Mr. MATHEWS.—The honorable member will admit that, unless there is corruption, this method to which he objects is a scientific one?

Mr. GREGORY.—Some extraordinary things have happened in the Customs Department.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I have never heard of corruption.

Mr. GREGORY.—Is this not opening the door to it?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—This is the outcome of a recommendation of the Inter-State Commission.

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not care whose recommendation it may have been. The method opens the door to a very bad practice.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It is opening the door to the assistance and encouragement of some of the best industries in Australia.

Mr. GREGORY.—It is strange to hear the Minister speaking like that.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—At any rate, I cannot understand the honorable member's mind or appreciate the consistency of his arguments.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Treasurer on consistency is remarkable. The position amounts to this: that Australian manufacturers have not to pay any duty on certain lines of machinery which they need in their factories, and which lines are not made in Australia, and which, incidentally, have a life of forty years or more; while the miner, the pastoralist, and the agriculturist, when they need machinery—the life of which, I might add by way of comparison, is only five to eight years—have to pay duties as high as 45 per cent. Is that fair or just?

Mr. GREENE.—It is not a fair way of putting the matter.

Mr. GREGORY.—I shall further quote various machines which have been introduced duty free, by specific intervention of the Minister, since March of last year—

Machine for manufacture of textile pom poms.

Furnaces—annealing, case-hardening, tempering, and similar processes.

Coating attachment for photographic plate, coating machine.

Forging machines for manufacture of bolts, nuts, and rivets and similar materials.

Diesel engine to each firm of engineers in Australia.



Presses—hydraulic extension.  
 Cutters—pneumatic rivet.  
 Paper—finishing, cutting, and folding, viz., plate eccentric screens for screening pulp.  
 Millsbaugh's patent suction couch and press rolls.

Baths for use in process of galvanizing.  
 Motion picture for reproducing (printing) positive copies from original film negatives.  
 Steam turbines.

Machines—transformers, rotary converters, alternating and direct current switch gear for controlling current from transformers and rotary converters for use in the manufacture of electrolytic zinc and by-products.

Doubling and filling machines (also known as universal winding and doubling machines) for winding silk or cotton from the bobbins to quills or small cops, for use in the manufacture of woven smallware.

Soap and candle making—candle moulding machines, turbine centrifugal patent fat extractors, automatic soap presses, automatic power soap-cutting tables, automatic power soap-slabbings machines, continuous wicking self-fitting candle machines, packing and wrapping machines combined or separate.

Pleating machines.

Carding machines, teasing machines, for use in the manufacture of yarns and textiles from marine fibre.

Diamond cutting and sawing machines and accessories.

Rotary drying machines for use in the manufacture of sheep dip.

Bulldozer forging machines.

Carbon paper coating machines.

Typewriter ribbon preparing machines (inks and winds ribbon on spools).

Gas engines and electric alternators, direct coupled or for direct coupling when imported for use in the production of Portland cement.

Magnetic pulleys for use in the manufacture of sheep dip.

Presses for embossing leather and plates for use therewith.

Carbon electrodes (17 inches in diameter by 60 to 70 inches in length, including screwed nipples therefor for use in the production of steel).

Drills for use in drilling machines.

Brushes, brass wire scratch for use on metal-polishing machines.

Stone channellers for quarrying stone or marble.

Metals—Copper plates known as stripper or starting plates of No. 16 or thicker gauge and of which the length and width both exceed 30 inches when imported for use in the production of electrolytic copper.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—In regard to all these things the necessary regulation has to be laid on the table of Parliament.

Mr. GREGORY.—When were regulations dealing with these numerous lines laid on the table? And, in any case, how many honorable members read the *Gazette*? The question is whether the duties which have been imposed in various

forms and in varying amounts by past Parliaments are to have continued effect; or whether, because some manufacturer, by political favour, has gained the ear of the Minister and made out a convincing case, those duties are to be abrogated. I was thunderstruck last year, when making certain inquiries regarding the cost of copper sheets, and while seeking information and endeavouring to get the duty reduced, to discover that the large sheets of copper, which are not manufactured here, were coming in free, under item 404. That item reads—

Materials and minor articles, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, for use in the manufacture of goods within the Commonwealth.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Beyond the honorable member's fear of corruption, he has not a single argument.

Mr. GREGORY.—I object to political pressure. I am satisfied that the Minister himself would not have promulgated many of the rates of duty which have been decided upon by this Committee. For example, will the Minister say that such a high duty as has been placed upon bananas was justifiable?

Mr. CORSER.—Will the honorable member say that, in all that list of machinery which he read as coming in free, there was a single item that ought not to have been permitted to enter free?

Mr. GREGORY.—I am not going into details.

Mr. CORSER.—The Minister went into the necessary details before agreeing to make them duty free. This is a Protective Tariff, and not a revenue Tariff.

Mr. GREGORY.—Suppose that a mine-owner wants a machine which cannot be made in Australia. How is he to know that the Minister has been remitting the duty upon that particular type of machine?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—But the Minister could not have done so until the regulation had been laid on the table of the House.

Mr. GREGORY.—The public do not know anything about that.

Mr. CORSER.—The interested public can always ascertain the exact position through the Customs Department.

Mr. GREGORY.—I recall the instance of the Tasmanian Government importing a large quantity of machinery, such as

water turbines, generators, and transformers. Great political pressure was brought to bear. I wrote for particulars, and a promise was made that they would be supplied me. But suddenly the Minister issued an order making the provision retrospective to the date of the introduction of the Tariff schedule, and under that order, either the whole, or a majority of the items comprised in the list, were admitted duty free. I contend that such a power should not be placed in the hands of any Minister.

Mr. MATHEWS.—If those articles cannot be manufactured in Australia, they ought to be admitted free.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—If a man enters into a contract for the delivery of certain goods which are subject to specific duties, and if those duties are afterwards remitted, the position is a pretty bad one.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—It is all right, because that position has been provided for.

Mr. GREGORY.—We all heard the statement of the Minister the other evening, that he was admitting tramway rails as appliances of machinery.

Mr. BURCHELL.—Does the honorable member object to tramway rails being thus admitted?

Mr. GREGORY.—I do not; but it shows in what an elastic way the item may be administered. But the Tariff should distinctly set out what items are upon the free list. It should not be open to any Minister to remove dutiable goods to that list. We know that to-day high Tariff rates are increasing the cost of living, and until the cost of living declines very considerably we shall not be able to get back to normal conditions.

Mr. STEWART.—Perhaps the situation can be met by placing this responsibility in the hands of the Board which it is proposed to create.

Mr. GREGORY.—I intend to move to strike out the word "machines." I cannot understand why honorable members are prepared to sacrifice their rights. I hold that, when once this Committee has determined that certain duties shall be imposed upon any article, those duties should be collected, and the Minister should not be clothed with power to remit them.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Parliament itself created this position.

Mr. GREGORY.—I deny that. It has been created by the Minister.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Provision for it is contained in the Customs Act.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—The Act was framed to meet very minor contingencies, and the Minister has considerably extended it.

Mr. GREGORY.—The schedule is perfectly clear. We all know the action which the Minister took in regard to navy shovels.

Mr. GREENE.—That action was not taken under this item.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Minister included those shovels in a special item of the Tariff. It was currently rumoured that many thousands of pounds were made by persons who purchased them only a few days before a duty was imposed upon them. It is this sort of thing which creates suspicion in the public mind.

Mr. GREENE.—Does the honorable member know anything about the matter?

Mr. GREGORY.—No; only from the general statements that were made.

Mr. GREENE.—Then does he think that it is a fair thing to mention it?

Mr. GREGORY.—If I had known the facts of the case, I can assure the Minister that I would have ventilated them long ago. He must realize the position which will be created if there be the slightest leakage from his Department, of which he will not always be the head. To a very great extent, the honorable gentleman must be advised by his departmental officers, and we are being invited to clothe that Department with the power to say that any of the machines with which we have been dealing shall be included in this item, and shall be admitted duty free. I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, Machine tools and appliances, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent."

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.17].—I am surprised at the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) suggesting that the alteration in the wording of this item has been adopted by me owing to pressure which has been brought to bear upon me



by the Prime Minister. So far from his statement being true, if the Prime Minister were subjected to a third degree examination, I do not suppose that he could tell honorable members what is contained in a single line of the Tariff, and certainly he does not know anything about this particular item. Now, I shall tell the Committee from where I got the wording of the item. The honorable member has repeatedly told us that I should have followed the recommendations of the Inter-State Commission. I have done so in regard to this particular item. I thought that the honorable member had studied the reports of that Commission.

Mr. GREGORY.—We tore them up when we found that the Minister did not follow the recommendations of the Commission.

Mr. GREENE.—When the Inter-State Commission recommended that this particular wording should be adopted, and gave excellent reasons in support of its recommendation, I adopted it. I have not followed it in one particular, however, inasmuch as I have not included the words, "Provided they are not commercially manufactured in the Commonwealth." But I have not the slightest objection to the insertion of those words, because they merely reflect what, as a matter of practice, has always been done. Let me tell honorable members how this thing is worked. When we receive an application for the free admission of any particular class of machinery, we immediately ask the applicant to support it with declarations from a number of prominent manufacturers in the line that they do not manufacture that class of machinery. We then proceed to make independent inquiries as to whether it is manufactured in Australia. It is only when an application is definitely supported in the way I have outlined, and when we cannot find anybody who is prepared to manufacture it, that the machinery to which it relates is placed upon the free list. In practice, the definition to which I have referred has always been followed. As a matter of strict definition, a machine tool is a machine which is used only in an engineer's shop.

Mr. GREGORY.—Not necessarily.

Mr. GREENE.—That is what is known in the trade as a machine tool.

Such tools are used only in engineering establishments. They do not include the ordinary machines which are used in manufacturing operations. As a matter of fact, in the working of the Department, the definition which I have quoted has been generally applied. Let me give an instance of this. I visited a factory a little while ago in which a machine was being used for the packing of goods. An empty carton went in at one end, passed along a machine which cut off a piece of paper, and the carton was then filled, weighed, and finally shot off the machine. I do not know whether that machine is a machine tool or an appliance. To my mind it is both. The honorable member for Dampier has suggested that the adoption of this proposal may open the door to corruption. I think that it would be an extremely difficult thing for corruption to occur in connexion with it, for the simple reason that it can be applied only when goods are not manufactured in the country. That is the test. Suppose that any Minister were to say, "I am going to allow So-and-So to have certain machinery free of duty, notwithstanding that it is being manufactured in Australia," what sort of hornet's nest would he immediately draw around his devoted head? He would not be able to stand against the opposition which would be created for a single instant. One of my greatest anxieties about the operation of this departmental by-law is that I may make a slip.

Mr. GREGORY.—Here is a particular case in which you allowed certain machinery to come in free to the 27th August, 1920, and in which you make it dutiable from the 31st December next.

Mr. GREENE.—From the information supplied by the honorable member I cannot say definitely what was the position. In that particular instance we, probably, found that somebody was about to start manufacturing, that the whole of his operations were tied up pending the delivery of certain machinery, and that later on somebody else was going to manufacture that machinery here. It was probably to meet some special case of that kind that the action in question was taken. But had we done any wrong upon that occasion, Parliament would have learned of it within a very short space of

time. As to the application of this item, if honorable members will turn to item 176, they will find a sub-item which reads, "machines and machinery. n.e.i." It is one of those drag-net items in the Tariff in which practically everything in the way of machinery is included. It includes every class of machinery, and a vast quantity which is not made in this country. It is impossible to set out in detail in the Tariff all the various classes of machines in existence, or that may come into existence. Take any industry that is being conducted in Australia today. The honorable member for Dampier is always telling us that the local manufacturer ought to be efficient. He certainly ought to be; and if there is invented in some other country a machine which revolutionizes the methods of production in his industry, it is necessary, in order that he may compete, that he shall obtain that machine. Does the honorable member suggest that it is right that we should charge duty on that new machine?

Mr. GREGORY.—I am afraid we would have great trouble if it happened to be an agricultural machine.

Mr. GREENE.—Such a machine, like everything else, would be dealt with on its merits. There are quite a number of things which have come under my notice from time to time to which free entry has been given. The honorable member must recognise that to impose the full duty on a machine which cannot be made in this country—and the test all the time is as to whether the machine can be made here—would be to impose immediately on the local manufacturer requiring the machine an additional overhead charge as compared with his competitors abroad, and thus to put him in a relatively worse position. This is not a case where the machine in question is made in this country, but where it is not made here, and in such circumstances we would put the local manufacturer requiring that machine in so much worse a position than that of the manufacturer abroad. As a consequence, we would then have to give him additional protection to enable him to compete. Wherein would lie the wisdom of such a procedure? From a Protectionist point of view, one could not excuse or condone it. It would be nonsensical to load the manufacturer here with a huge additional overhead charge

in respect of machinery which could not be made here. And so we interpret this item in a way in which I believe the Parliament intended that it should be interpreted.

Mr. GREGORY.—Will that apply to agricultural machinery which is not made in this country?

Mr. GREENE.—So far as one can say in regard to machinery that is not made here, and which is not a competitor with machines that are already being made here—

Mr. GIBSON.—Or if the requirements of the country were not met, how would the item apply?

Mr. GREENE.—The question is not as to the requirements of the country being met, but rather as to whether the machine is made here. In adopting this wording of the item, and I admit that the change, to some extent, widens the interpretation—I am following a definite recommendation of the Inter-State Commission, which reported that—

The authority afforded by this item has been largely utilized, and a perusal of the list of machines exempted from duty under its provisions indicates that its interpretation has been of great service to Australian industries. The Commission recommends that the item should be amended to read, "Machines, machine tools and appliances, provided they are not commercially manufactured in the Commonwealth, as prescribed by departmental by-laws."

The Inter-State Commission inquired into the whole position, and reported that it was desirable that the alteration should be made.

I have only one other matter to deal with at this stage. The honorable member for Dampier said that we should have retained item 175 in the form in which it appeared in the old Tariff.

Mr. GREGORY.—I said the word "machines" should be struck out.

Mr. GREENE.—The reason why we struck out the old item 175 was that, although it had been in the Tariff from the very beginning, I think—certainly since 1908—it had never once been operated. That shows clearly that the means adopted there were for all practical purposes inoperative, and it seemed to me that it was not desirable in those circumstances to continue something which was of no effect. I have asked the Committee on this occasion, therefore, to agree to its being struck out. I assure the honorable



member that I believe this alteration in the wording of the item will prove to be beneficial to the industries and the people of Australia.

Mr. FOWLER.—Are we to understand that the principle is to be made applicable to all industries, including the agricultural industry?

Mr. GREENE. — Provided that the machine comes within the definition, and is not covered by any specific item. The manufacture of machinery in this country is developing all the time, and under the item to which I have referred, namely, "Machines and machinery, n.e.i.," which is dutiable, there falls a vast quantity of machinery which at present is not made here. The definite intention of the Parliament in regard to the operation of the Tariff has been that, as a machine is made here, it shall automatically become dutiable. Over and over again I have been criticised for operating the item in the opposite direction. The intention of the Parliament is that it shall be operative in both ways. It intended that a machine which is not being made in this country, but is required here, should be brought in under the free list. But it is equally intended that when a machine is made here it shall go back under the duty. In other words, Parliament, in the first place, makes all machinery dutiable. It then gives the Minister power to release it from duty, but it also gives him the power, once a machine is being made here, to impose the duty that Parliament has allotted to it. That is the way in which the whole machinery of the Tariff operates. I admit that it gives to myself and my officers a great deal of work. It involves also a responsibility which one feels sometimes one would like to put on some one else's shoulders.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—But we must have Tariff elasticity if the system is to be workable.

Mr. GREENE.—That is so.

Mr. GREGORY.—The manufacturer gets his machinery free of duty and his parts of machinery under item 404 are also free of duty. He should be compelled to pay like other people.

Mr. GREENE. — He pays duty on everything that is made here. The quantity of machinery which is imported under item 404 as compared with the

enormous mass of machinery that is going into the various manufactories of the Commonwealth is a mere drop in the bucket. To say that our manufacturers get their machinery free in that broad sense is to say what is absolutely incorrect. We cannot specify certain machines which are not made in this country. In many cases, we do not know what they are. They are machines which are not yet invented, or which may come along as a result of new processes of manufacture. If we knew of all the things that might be done in this country we could set them out in a long schedule, and Parliament could say definitely whether or not they should be free. But we do not know what they are. And so Parliament says, first of all, "All machinery is dutiable." Then it gives the Minister power to release machinery from duties. That is the way in which the Tariff has been operated from the inception of the Commonwealth, and it will have to be continued in that way if we are to have the necessary elasticity.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND (Illawarra) [5.35].—I presume that we shall have an opportunity to discuss the method under which these items are lifted in and out of the Tariff when the clause under which the authority is given comes before us.

Mr. GREENE.—This item is the clause.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—But there must be a clause giving the Minister this power.

Mr. GREENE.—That provision is in the Customs Act now, and will not come up for review.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—I find that in this Tariff a power that has hitherto been exercised over inconsiderable items has been extended to a range so wide that no one can say what may be done under it. That being so, I think the Committee ought to very carefully review the circumstances under which this power can be exercised. We are fortunate in having, in charge of the Department of Trade and Customs to-day, a Minister against whom the breath of suspicion cannot lie. That gives us an opportunity of discussing these matters entirely free from any personal application, and we should therefore provide such safeguards as will make it impossible for future Ministers to be subjected to

grave suspicion without being able to protect themselves unless specific charges are made. That is the position of every man who is called upon to exercise autocratic powers over matters which affect the interests of sections or individuals in the community. There is no doubt that the power conferred by this clause is such as to make it very much to the interests of some people—importers or manufacturers—to have it operated in either one way or the other. I think it very unwise for Parliament to allow its power of supervision over this matter to pass to the Minister individually, particularly when it covers so wide a range of articles as are included by the change made in the wording of the item. It is scarcely open to the Minister (Mr. Greene) to rely on a report of the Inter-State Commission in this instance, when he has rejected so many of the other reports made by the same authority. I admit at once that it is necessary that some body should have authority to do this thing; but it is highly undesirable that it should rest in the hands of one man without the supervision of Parliament. It places a Minister in a position in which he should not be placed if other remedies are available, and it seems to me that in this case other remedies are available. The Minister, before taking action, should be moved either by specified officials of the Department or by some specified authority.

Mr. GREENE.—He cannot move until the matter is brought up by his officers.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That is the departmental routine.

Mr. GREENE.—I mean that, as a matter of fact, in practice, it would otherwise be impossible.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—The officers who have to take action are gentlemen who look to the Minister for those recommendations which assure their professional future.

Mr. STEWART.—Possibly it will be a matter for the proposed Board.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—The Minister may be glad to have the responsibility placed on the Board. A system of the kind has operated in the past, but it is now sought to operate it in much more important matters, and to give the Minister greatly increased powers.

I think the Inter-State Commission might have gone further. It is quite possible for a local industry to be established on so small a scale as to be utterly useless as a means of supplying the whole requirements of Australia, and yet the existence of some such trifling enterprise may give the Minister power to impose a tax on every user of the commodity produced.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The industry must be on a commercial basis.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That does not mean that an industry shall be able to supply all the requirements of Australia, but that the commodity produced can be sold at a commercial price. In the case of mangles, for instance, with which we dealt a little while ago, we had no information to show that even ten of any description are produced in a year in Australia. Yet because, somewhere or other, a little industry has been established, as to which, as I say, we have no information, every user is to be taxed. That, I think, is a principle for which we cannot stand. It is laid down that, if there is an industry producing an article on a commercial basis, the Tariff shall operate, and the whole of the power is placed in the hands of the Minister alone. It is, of course, a great power for any Minister to exercise, and there ought to be every possible safeguard. I further think that the decisions of the Minister should be brought before Parliament in some more definite way than simply in the form of a document handed in with a host of others from time to time. The assent of Parliament should be necessary for these changes at some stage. There cannot be the slightest objection to such subsidiary Tariff arrangements coming before Parliament every quarter, half-year, or year; and in that way honorable members would be kept informed of what was being done. Then greater publicity ought to be given to these decisions; the people interested in the particular industry ought to have the fullest notice of what is proposed. I venture to say that not one-half of the members of this House knew that the Minister possessed this extraordinary power until the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) informed us that the Minister could make items free, and could give



retrospective relief, as in the case of Tasmania, involving thousands of pounds. I feel quite sure that honorable members generally did not know that by the mere official publication of a document such things could be done. At any rate, it was certainly news to me; and I think there should be some method of either requiring the consent of Parliament to the decisions or providing that the latter shall be placed before us in some definite way, so that there may be the constant check of publicity on the actions, nominally of the Minister, but really of the officers of the Department.

Mr. GREENE.—There is full publicity now; it is quite impossible to do anything in secret. If there was anything wrong, those interested would very soon know.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—That is the safeguard.

Mr. GREENE.—Quite so; it would be impossible to do anything wrong without immediately raising a storm.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—It is the only safeguard we have.

Mr. GREENE.—And I think it is pretty effective.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That is, we have power to “lock the stable after the horse is gone.”

Mr. GREENE.—Not at all.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Take a case in which the Minister makes an order that is retrospective for several months—the fact that the thing is done, and the concession granted, cannot be altered if objection is subsequently taken. The real check is the fear of the Minister that if he does anything wrong it will be immediately exposed. Wherever possible, this sort of business should be done in the open day, rather than by the Minister, on the recommendation of departmental officers, without Parliament knowing anything at all of the matter.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [5.47].—I should like the Minister (Mr. Greene) to indicate what is the practice in other countries.

Mr. GREENE.—So far as I can learn, there are, in some form or another, similar provisions in most other countries.

Mr. FENTON.—I am much averse to legislation by regulation, and the responsibility under discussion is a very serious one to impose on any Minister and his

officers. I think, however, that there are sufficient safeguards. There are always people interested in any decisions of the kind, and if the Minister or his officers are guilty of any malpractice, it will soon come to the knowledge of some member of Parliament, and be discussed here. Again, I take it that the new Board will from time to time be called into consultation on matters of the kind. I understand that the Board will be in a position to recommend, for instance, that a duty shall be imposed in the case of an industry which is coming into being; at any rate, the Board will doubtless be able to render the Minister some assistance. There is one fact in connexion with the Customs Department on which we may congratulate ourselves. We are very fortunate in having the services of the present Controller-General, who, like his predecessors, has for years followed the practice of selecting the most brainy men for special training, with the result that now, I believe, the Department stands in the happy position of possessing some of the most efficient officers to be found in any part of the world. This is a practice which might well be adopted in all the Departments, both Commonwealth and State. Another fact on which we may congratulate ourselves is that, neither in the case of the present Minister nor any of his predecessors, has there been any suspicion in regard to their integrity in the work of administration.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—“How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds”!

Mr. FENTON.—I know; and, as I say, no one is more averse than myself to legislation by regulation. But we seem to be living in times more abnormal than ever, making it essential to give powers of the kind under proper safeguards to the Minister and his officers, and, of course, also to the proposed Board, in order that industries already established, or in prospect, may be assisted. If the proposal of the Minister goes to the vote, I shall support it.

Sir ROBERT BEST (Kooyong) [5.52].—From my practical experience, I am led to largely indorse the statement made by the Minister (Mr. Greene). The principle involved in this item is absolutely essential for the effective working of the Tariff; there must be a certain degree of elasticity. The same verbiage

may not, perhaps, appear in every Tariff throughout the world, yet this elasticity is provided for, either through Customs Commissioners, Commissioners of Taxation, some Board, or Ministers themselves.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—There is a difference between the Minister and a Board, or Commissioners.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I am at present speaking of the principle involved. The next point is publicity, and I call the attention of honorable members to the fact that the schedule provides that the item shall be applied as prescribed by departmental by-laws—the latter meaning by-laws made by the Minister and published in the *Gazette*. The first point, it will be seen, is the publication in the *Gazette*, which circulates throughout Australia. The information may also be published in the newspapers.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—You mean that the by-law is the actual determination?

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Quite so. I admit that the by-law does not go through all the formalities usually associated with a regulation, but the enactment of the order by the Minister, and its publication in the *Gazette*, constitute a departmental by-law for this particular purpose. As the Minister says, it is obvious that there are many “watch-dogs” about. The Minister must, first of all, protect himself by an assurance that the commodity in question can be commercially produced in Australia, and to that end he requires certificates from the leading manufacturers in the line in support of the application. Many industries owe their origin to the fact that it was made possible to obtain patented machines free of duty. In some cases if duty had had to be paid on a machine worth, perhaps, £100,000, the duty might be anything from £25,000 to £40,000, representing all the difference between starting and not starting an industry. I quite admit that it is possible, as in many other Departments—although surrounded by such safeguards it is not likely—that there may be corruption, and that a degree of influence may be exercised on a Minister. I have urged for many years the creation of a Tariff Board, and I am glad that the present Minister proposes to appoint one, which I trust will be composed of experts, for the purpose of guid-

ing Parliament in these matters. It may be advisable, when the Bill is introduced, for the Minister to consider the wisdom of including a clause to the effect that before this item operates it must receive the recommendation of the Tariff Board.

Mr. GREENE.—As a matter of fact, I propose to do that. That was one of the objects I had in bringing the Board into existence. I felt the responsibility on my own shoulders, and felt that I would like to shed it.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—I sympathize with the Minister, and regard his decision as a very proper and wise precaution. I would urge on the honorable member for Illawarra (Mr. Hector Lamond) that it would be a grave mistake to submit anything of the kind to Parliament, as it would mean serious delay.

Mr. GREENE.—I explained when speaking that the old item 175 had been in the Tariff for years, but had never been used.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—To submit these things to Parliament for its sanction would altogether destroy the value of the provision. We could never get anything done promptly. If it is to be effective, provision must be made for expedition, and if action can be taken expeditiously—as it has been in many cases—it will add largely to the value of what we are doing. With the Minister's assurance that provision will be made in that regard when the Bill is introduced, the Committee may readily accept the item as it stands.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 175 (Apparatus for liquefaction of gases) agreed to.

Item 176 (Roller bearings, &c.).

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.59].—The wording of the item as it stands does not do all that we desire. I therefore move—

That paragraph (A) be amended by adding the following:—“And on and after 16th June, 1921—

(A) Roller bearings and ball bearings not being roller-bearing or ball-bearing plummer or hanger blocks, ad val. British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.”

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.



## Item 177—

Locomotives, traction and portable engines, road rollers n.e.i., including scarifier attachments, ad val., British,  $27\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.1].—Certain classes of traction engines are not made in this country, particularly the very heavy kind, which is used for heavy ploughing work, where the ploughs are operated by a cable which is drawn between the engines, one of which stands on either side of the piece of land which is being ploughed. The only place where these engines are being made is England. Not many of them are likely to be used here, and, so far as I know, they are never owned by individual land-owners, as the plant is too expensive. They travel from place to place, and so much an acre is charged for the ground they break up. They also do draining work, and are very good for breaking up swamp land. We do not want to include those machines in this item. There are also certain other classes of traction engines which we do not want to include. The effect of the amendment which I shall now move will be to exclude altogether from the operation of the duty those classes of traction engines which are not made in Australia. I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921,

- (A) Locomotives, traction engines n.e.i., and portable engines; road rollers n.e.i., including scarifier attachments, ad val., British,  $27\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.
- (B) Traction engines of a class or kind not made in Australia, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent."

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND**.—Do those cover the petrol-driven traction engines?

**Mr. GREENE**.—No; I think all the petrol-driven engines come under another designation.

**Mr. CORSER** (Wide Bay) [6.4].—I would urge on the Minister the advisableness of increasing the duty on this item in accordance with the recommendation of the Inter-State Commission. It should be remembered that we have made the cost of the steel higher than was anticipated when the Inter-State Commission made their recommendation. They

recommend duties of  $32\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. British and 45 per cent. general, and that rate is what I would like the Minister to adopt. **Mr. Justice Higgins** has recently given an award reducing the working hours in the industry from forty-eight, as they were when the Commission sat, to forty-four. There has also been a general reduction in wages in Great Britain and America of about 20 per cent. The request I am making is, therefore, only reasonable, and I think it applies also to item 176; but that has already been passed. It should also apply to item 178.

**Mr. FENTON**.—The honorable member is probably thinking of sub-item c of item 178—"Motive power machinery and appliances (except electric), n.e.i., ad val., British,  $27\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent." The Inter-State Commission recommend that the duty should be: British,  $32\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

**Mr. CORSER**.—Having brought the matter under the Minister's notice, I should like him to consider whether he can increase the duty on this item as well.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 178 (Motive power machinery and appliances except electric).

**Mr. CORSER** (Wide Bay) [6.8].—I now ask the Minister to adopt the recommendation of the Inter-State Commission for an increase of the duty on sub-item c, "n.e.i.," to  $32\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. British and 45 per cent. general.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.9].—I think that in this item I have followed the recommendations of the Inter-State Commission.

**Mr. FENTON**.—The information I have here is that the Inter-State Commission recommended that the duty should be increased as stated by the honorable member for Wide Bay.

**Mr. GREENE**.—That is not my information.

Item agreed to.

Item 179 (Electrical machines and appliances).

**Mr. BURCHELL** (Fremantle) [6.10].—I have a letter dated 9th May from the Fremantle Municipal Tramway and Lighting Board, stating that they were expecting the arrival of certain electrical material, and informing me that they

had communicated with the Customs Department enclosing letters from the English Electrical Company and G. Weymouth and Company advising that neither of these firms was able to manufacture the requirements of the Perth State trams or the Fremantle municipal tramways. They deal with turbine generators of over 5,000 kilowatt capacity, rotary convertors, electrical motors, and equipment for cars. My informant advises me that they were expecting delivery of a rotary convertor at a cost of £6,000. As these machines are not manufactured in Australia, I should like to know if the Minister can give some relief?

Mr. GREENE.—They will be in exactly the same position as other machinery. If we can give them relief under item 174 we shall do so.

Mr. BURCHELL.—I am satisfied with the Minister's explanation that relief may be given under item 174 if the machinery complies with the conditions laid down this afternoon.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND (Illawarra) [6.14].—The same complaint is made by a great many corporations and public bodies in connexion with the installation of heavy electrical plant. I am not quite clear whether item 174 will apply to specific cases or to a certain class of machinery.

Mr. GREENE. — If a specific case is stated action will be taken under item 174 to release that particular machine from the operation of the Tariff, and the decision will stand so long as the by-law is in existence in regard to every case that may arise.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—In the old Tariff there was a limit of horse-power. That seemed to be the difficulty, because the special class of machinery required for these huge concerns was subjected to a duty of 40 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—I agree, and that is why we operate item 174.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND. — Has it operated in every such case?

Mr. GREENE.—In every case in which we could do so conscientiously; that is to say, in regard to machinery which cannot be manufactured in Australia.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—There is no attempt to manufacture such machinery.

Mr. GREENE.—I hardly agree with the honorable member. Some very big contracts have been accepted.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND. — Parliament ought to know what is being done in regard to enterprises of the kind mentioned. Here is a great scheme for the conversion of water-power into electrical energy for industrial enterprises in cities and country towns, and it is met by a Tariff operating in a way never intended by Parliament. The provisions of item 174 leave it the sport of Ministers and departmental officials, thus making it impossible for any business men to engage in any such enterprises. Under the general Tariff a business man has the written document to consult and see how he stands, but when the duty may be remitted at the will of a Minister no man will know his exact position. Under the system at present in operation, one duty is suspended for three months, another is made retrospective for six months, while another may run for twelve months, thus making confusion worse confounded. A business man wants to look ahead, and to be able to see where he stands.

Mr. GREENE.—He could find out without very much trouble.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—These business men have not the knowledge of the Minister regarding the operation of the Tariff, and I venture to say it will be news to many of them to know that this system is in operation.

Mr. GREENE.—Nearly all of them know it already.

Mr. FENTON.—A big contract has been let quite recently to a British firm. They know all about the operation of this Tariff.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Then how is it that complaints are coming from municipal and shire councils in New South Wales, as well as other big bodies controlling large enterprises? These secret treaties in connexion with the Tariff ought to have been avoided if possible. Parliament does not intend to impose a duty upon machinery that cannot be made in Australia, and so in these items we ought to be able to say definitely what class of machinery is protected and what class is not. These big high-class machines, such as are required by the



Sydney City Council, are certainly not being made in Australia.

Mr. GREENE.—Some of the very largest machines for the Sydney City Council are being made in Australia.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—This must be news to many honorable members, because it has been reported recently that the Cockatoo Island Dockyard has refused to make certain machinery for the Sydney City Council, and we have been informed that it cannot be made anywhere else in Australia. This reported refusal by the dockyard officials is understood to be responsible for some of the unemployment at that establishment, but now the Minister tells us that some of the machinery referred to is being made here. One wants to know where the truth lies in this matter. Australian requirements in these enormously powered machines will hardly warrant the installation of big plants to meet the demand, and so we ought to have a definite assurance that these enterprises are not going to be handicapped by the failure of the Tariff to give a definite expression to the intention of Parliament.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.20].—The electrical industry is developing in this country, and during the last few years has made most wonderful strides. The advance of electrical engineering in Australia reads almost like a romance.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—I am afraid there is a little romance about some of the statements that have been made concerning it.

Mr. GREENE.—I am sorry I have not with me a photograph of a turbine generator which is in course of construction now for the Sydney municipal works, I think. Recently a transformer of 150,000 volts was made in Western Australia.

Mr. FOWLER.—That is correct.

Mr. GREENE.—That is one of the highest tension machines that has been made in this country to date; in fact, there are few machines of higher tension made. I mention these two instances as an indication of what is taking place. I should be loath to take any steps which would prevent this development, because I feel that, in the progress of the electrical industry in Australia, lies the solu-

tion of many of our problems. We are only on the fringe of what can be accomplished with hydro-electric power. I agree with the honorable member for Illawarra (Mr. Hector Lamond) that it would be a grave mistake to put a duty on these machines if they are not being made in Australia, but this industry is growing rapidly, and we are passing necessarily from stage to stage in the progress of development. Things are being done to-day in the Commonwealth the mere suggestion of which ten years ago would have been received with laughter. In regard to the complaints mentioned by the honorable member for Illawarra, a number of gentlemen waited on me recently, and I told them frankly that I was not prepared to allow the large free entry of goods for which they were asking, but that whenever they could show that the local manufacturer was unable to produce the goods they required, or to give delivery within a reasonable period, the duty would be waived. If delivery cannot be given for two or three years ahead, and a machine is required immediately, it is useless to impose a duty. I told them that the decision of the Department would depend on the special circumstances surrounding each application. Wherever necessary we allow free entry, and that has been done particularly in connexion with the hydro-electric scheme put before us by the State Governments of New South Wales and Tasmania, and the Morwell scheme in Victoria. But when we have been asked for a remission of duties upon machines which are being made in this country, we have refused.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [6.25].—A large factory for the manufacture of electrical machinery has been established in New South Wales for some time, and additions to the premises are now being made. About £200,000 has been invested in the establishment, which now employs 355 hands. When the building is complete, 1,000 hands will be employed. This factory is engaging extensively in the class of work now under discussion.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—That establishment is dealing with general electrical appliances, but I was referring to special machines.

Mr. RILEY.—We should encourage the local manufacture of the special machines also. A big effort is being

made to supply all Australia's requirements. We do not yet know the possibilities of this industry, and it is one in respect of which the Commonwealth should be self-contained.

**Mr. FOWLER** (Perth) [6.26].—The honorable member for Illawarra (Mr. Hector Lamond) is unduly apprehensive as to the possible danger of the permissive clause in regard to the free importation of certain things which otherwise would be dutiable. The automatic process by which the goods are allowed to enter now is preferable to the older one, by which the introduction was a mere matter of decision by the Executive. In this case, we are safeguarded by conditions that are reasonable and right, namely, that the article is not being made in Australia, and is not likely to be made. Therefore, I think that even the most ardent Free Trader will agree that this is a power which certainly ought to exist in connexion with the Tariff, and which, if exercised in a proper way, will be advantageous to the industries of the Commonwealth. The honorable member has also said that certain electrical appliances cannot be made in Australia. I know that an effort was made a little while ago to convince the Minister that even some of the machines which are being made in Australia should be allowed to enter the Commonwealth duty free. It so happens that transformers are being made in Western Australia, which, however, is so remote from the immediate interests of the majority of honorable members that they probably will not give that State credit for a manufacture of this kind. The following telegram from the manufacturers of electrical appliances in Western Australia is enlightening:—

Strongly protest against allegation that it is impossible to manufacture high-tension transformers in Australia. Output of our works last twelve months was fifty-three transformers, ranging from 6,000 to 150,000 volts, total, 1,450 kilowatts.

That is a pretty good record for Western Australia. If the honorable member for Illawarra cannot find firms in Sydney who can meet the requirements of some of the enterprises in his State, he might indicate to me what is lacking, and I assure him that the order will be taken in hand and carried out satisfactorily in Western Australia for New South Wales.

I shall not claim any commission on the transaction.

Item agreed to.

*Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.*

Item 180—

Electrical and gas appliances, viz.:—

(D) Metal filament lamps, per lb., British, 1s.; intermediate, 3s.; general, 3s.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) agreed to—

That the following words be added to sub-item (D):—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, Filament lamps for lighting and heating, per lb., British, 1s.; intermediate and general, 3s."

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 181—

Electrical articles and materials, viz.:—

(A) Arc lamps; covered cable and wire, except cotton covered; electric vacuum tubes; measuring and recording instruments, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent.

(B) Cable and wire, cotton covered, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

(C) Carbon manufactures of all kinds, including carbon blocks, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) agreed to—

That the following words be inserted after sub-item (A):—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, Arc lamps n.e.i.; covered cable and wire n.e.i.; electric vacuum tubes; measuring and recording instruments, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent."

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.5].—I move—

That sub-item (B) be amended by inserting the figure (1) before the word "Cable", and by adding the following words:—" (2) Cables, telegraph and telephone, paper insulated, lead covered, on and after 1st October, 1922, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent."

**Mr. FLEMING**.—Does this amendment apply to telephone wire and connexions?

**Mr. GREENE**.—If covered. It does not affect material imported by the Postmaster-General.

**Mr. FLEMING**.—Does it affect the main cables or the cross-country wires and independent lines?



Mr. GREENE.—The wire used in the country is bare; the amendment relates only to covered wires. This is a deferred duty.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [8.8].—The Committee is asked to impose rates of 30, 35, and 45 per cent. on carbon manufactures of all kinds, including carbon blocks. I am assured that those rates are insufficient to protect an industry which was established in consequence of a promise made by the Prime Minister during the war that companies formed to supply the needs of Australia at that time would subsequently receive every consideration from the Government. This company has spent between £10,000 and £15,000, and during the war supplied carbon at less than it could be bought from importers, its price being £12 10s. per thousand, while imported cell carbons cost £40 per thousand. Now that the war is over, carbon cells are being imported from America, and probably from Germany through Great Britain, because, before the war, much of this material came from Germany. Those interested in motion pictures have circularized members in protest against the duties, pointing out that the local carbons are unsatisfactory. They desire to kill this industry.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Does it need the protection of a duty higher than 45 per cent.? If so, it might as well be killed.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Those interested in moving pictures are well able to support an Australian industry. With the least excuse, they increase the price of admission to their entertainments; as, for instance, when the musicians award slightly increased the pay of musicians.

Mr. FLEMING.—Then they will probably increase their prices again if these rates are increased.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Their prices are rapidly becoming so high that the public will refuse to pay them. Recently, I visited a picture theatre in Melbourne where the films were the cheapest that could be obtained, and it was a waste of time to look at them. We know that many persons have rapidly become exceedingly wealthy at the expense of the picture spectators. An industry which can manufacture the carbon cells that Australia requires should receive more

protection, if it cannot continue under the present duties.

Mr. FLEMING.—Would those who manufacture the films suffer, or only those who reproduce them?

Mr. CHARLTON.—If the manufacture of this material is discontinued, three factories, I understand, will close. This industry is only in its infancy, and can grow only if adequately protected. I hope that the Minister (Mr. Greene) will consider the matter. Those interested in moving-picture shows are not deserving of more attention than others in the community.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [8.13].—I hope that the Minister (Mr. Greene) will give heed to the representations of the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton). In a letter that I have received from persons interested in the carbon industry in Australia, they say that their company recently tendered in Sydney for a contract, and was beaten by an American firm, which put in a price almost 50 per cent. less. They add that the Americans are determined to capture the carbon market of Australia. Prior to the war, Germany and Austria chiefly supplied the carbon used here, but the Australian firm, if it gets the protection that it seeks, will be able to meet the needs of this country in regard to carbon. Men who have invested their money in this business are satisfied that, if they get the protection which was practically promised to them, they will be able to build up an industry that will fully supply the needs of Australia. The opponents of this duty say that sufficient money cannot be raised in Australia for the purpose of establishing factories for the manufacture of all the different classes of carbons required by the various trades operating in the Commonwealth, because the manufacturers in the older countries of the world have not only more up-to-date machinery, but also the advantage of the world's markets at their command. But our concern should be, not as to what is done in other countries, but as to whether we can build up industries here capable of supplying all the needs of Australia. In order to enable them to be established here, I would build up a wall all round Australia, and prohibit the importation

of any goods capable of being satisfactorily manufactured by ourselves, both in regard to quantity and quality. I know that the picture-show proprietors are anxious to secure an article much below the Australian cost of production, but I am sure this Parliament will not listen to opposition of that nature when the life of young industries is at stake. One firm has already spent £15,000 in the purchase of land, the erection of a building, and the installation of the necessary machinery for the manufacture of carbons; and it has undertaken to supply the whole of Australia's carbon requirements. Our Government Departments were very glad to get the carbons made by this firm during the war; and surely now, armed with the assurance that the company will provide the necessary quantity and quality, the Minister should favorably consider the request of these people for the increase of the duty by another 5 or 10 per cent. The wishes of the picture-show proprietors are a secondary consideration. I have not asked the Minister for much during the consideration of the Tariff, but I hope that the request I am putting forward will appeal to his common sense, provided the people manufacturing these carbons can supply the whole of the needs of Australia, which I am sure they can do.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.20].—The industry referred to by the honorable member for Henty (Mr. Francis) was commenced during the war, and did some very useful work in turning out carbons which, according to the evidence given by users, quite outside the picture film people, have given satisfaction. In framing the Tariff, I took into consideration the service rendered by this industry during the war, and fixed rates of duty which I think ought to be sufficient. I am not quite satisfied that the company which is now making the carbons is managed on the best lines, but I am satisfied that if it increases its efficiency it will find the duties provided quite ample. In the circumstances, I do not feel disposed to increase the rates.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [8.23].—I have not received one of the circulars in opposition to these duties. It is about the only one issued to honorable members

that I have not received, but my general knowledge of the subject will stand me in good stead. I have, however, read the circular forwarded by the company referred to by the honorable member for Henty (Mr. Francis). My information is that these people are not using graphite to the extent it should be used, and that they are making their carbons from coke. If that is the case, they cannot possibly compete with the carbons made in Great Britain, because the article used in picture shows must be guaranteed to stand a very high voltage. I have seen an Australian carbon side by side with a British carbon, and the evidence in favour of the British article was overwhelming. We have graphite in Australia, and there is no reason why it should not be used. An industry which seeks protection ought to be in a position to deliver the goods. I do not believe these people are doing so. Mr. Langley, an expert in picture-show work, who submitted the Australian carbons to a practical test covering a period of several months, has assured me that they do not approach the British article in any point. On one occasion he found that through the faultiness of the carbon he was using his machine was almost ruined, and if he had not had a stand-by, the show in which he was using the carbon could not have proceeded. The protection on this item—45 per cent. under the general Tariff—is about the highest protection afforded in the schedule. At any rate, it should be enough to induce any firm to make a good article. It is not worth while imposing a handicap upon other people unless the industry so protected can “deliver the goods” up to the amount of that handicap. The protection afforded in this instance is altogether too high. Mr. Langley is willing to give a demonstration before any electrical expert nominated by the Government to prove that his evidence is correct. Those associated with him say that they are quite willing that this high duty should be imposed if their evidence is wrong, but that under present conditions they must use British carbon, even if the duty be 60 per cent. However, they also say that if the Australian manufacturer can produce carbon up to the right standard, they will use nothing else. This is a



fair proposition, and I think that the discussion on the item should be adjourned to enable this demonstration to be given. We are anxious to foster Australian industries on sound lines. Here is an opportunity of doing so. Let us have a demonstration that this industry is "delivering the goods" up to the necessary standard. The same firms are agents for the Australian products. I have made inquiries from another source which show that if one desires to purchase Australian carbons they are not always available. There may be an understanding with some of these firms so that it may pay them better to sell something that is not manufactured in Australia. That is what we should endeavour to prevent. My information was not obtained from the same source as the other information given to me by an expert who said that he was prepared to use the Australian product if it was as good as the British. He also said that he would be compelled to use the British product irrespective of the duty.

**Mr. ANSTEY** (Bourke) [8.31].—The honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley) appears to be full of information, but so far as I could gather he has not been quoting from any file. I have before me a most voluminous document from the Amalgamated Pictures Limited, which contains nothing but information, but after reading it, I have come to the conclusion that it is of little value; it would take a great deal to convince me on the arguments adduced by that body. I am not likely to alter my opinions in the slightest degree, on the evidence brought forward by this corporation, because all the arguments used against this Australian industry have been employed against other industries. For instance, they say that it is inadequately capitalized, and in answer to that I may say that there is nothing in the world to prevent them contributing the requisite funds. They also say that the products of the Australian Carbon Proprietary Limited are of unsatisfactory quality, and if there is anything in that, the same argument might be used against other industries. There is another statement in their circular letter—I do not think it is true—in which they say that biograph carbons used to cost £25 per 1,000, but owing to the new duties, and various

other factors, the price has risen to £57 per 1,000. That may be so; but what do the other parties say? The local manufacturers say that for various sizes they, the Ever Ready Company of Sydney, quoted 36s., 43s., 58s., 64s., and 220s. per 1,000 carbons. The prices for the imported article of the same type were 17s. 10d., 19s. 10d., 22s. 2d., 32s. 11d., and 123s. 2d. per 1,000, and the opinion is expressed that these were German goods coming in as British. There has evidently been under-cutting to kill the local industry. The Australian Carbons Proprietary Limited say that when their company quoted the Ever Ready Company of Sydney for a large parcel of cell carbons, they were informed that their prices were about 50 per cent. higher than the quote from England notwithstanding that the quote was under the cost of production. They also state—

During the war, the cellmakers were charged £40 per 1,000 for cell carbons by importers, when my company were able to supply we quoted at £12 10s. per 1,000. The result of this was that cellmakers were able to get orders for cells; to-day, two new firms—Widdis Company and McIlwraith Company—are making cells, and only recently received an order of 150,000 cells from the Post Office. This order was only possible on account of our company being able to supply them with the carbons as required, and at a reasonable price.

I do not care to what extent the duties are increased. If an industry was worthy of support during the war, and could produce a satisfactory commodity, we should give it adequate protection. In the words of the honorable member for Kooyong (Sir Robert Best), the higher the duty the lower the price. Of course, every one knows that when the rates are increased the importers bring down the price, in order to compete with internal competition. In this instance we can be a light to the world by producing our own carbons, and if the Amalgamated Pictures Limited want carbons, let them use those manufactured in Australia. Carbons used during the war period can be used in times of peace. I believe the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley) said that a duty of 45 per cent. was a sufficient handicap, but it all depends on how far a competitor has to run. A handicap of 45 per cent. over a short distance would be a great advantage, but over 100 miles it would not be of much use.

Mr. FOLEY.—The proportion is the same.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Yes; but a competitor would be "winded" before he reached the post. The Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) assured us that, if advantage is taken of the high Tariff, the provisions of a measure which he intends introducing will be applied, and in these circumstances the imposition of high duties will not be detrimental to the consumers. In order to give the local company an opportunity to produce, I move—

That the item be amended by adding to sub-item (c) the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, ad val., British, 45 per cent.; intermediate, 55 per cent.; general, 60 per cent."

Mr. FOLEY (Kalgoorlie) [8.38].—I am strongly opposed to the amendment submitted by the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey). There is one argument which I did not use when previously placing the position before the Committee, and I shall now submit it to the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) in the form of questions. Did the Australian Navy use Australian carbons in their searchlights during the war period? Did the Military Department use Australian carbons for military work? If the replies are in the affirmative, I am prepared to support the higher duties proposed; and, if not, they should be allowed to remain as they appear in the schedule.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [8.39].—If the Australian Navy did not use Australian carbons in the searchlights, and if the Australian Military Forces did not use Australian carbons for military work, they should have done so.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [8.40].—I am in favour of having everything we require manufactured in Australia, and I shall always fight for increased duties. At the same time, I wish that the whole of this Tariff could be taken *in globo*, so that we could discuss the difference in exchange dumping Bill, which is to be introduced. I was surprised to learn from the Acting Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Cook) yesterday that the difference in exchange with Czecho-Slovakia is eleven times greater than it was in pre-

war days. Prior to the war, a German piano could be purchased in Berlin for £20, after allowing a fair profit to the seller. If the cost of production of that piano has increased by 100 per cent., 200 per cent., or 300 per cent., the price on the last-mentioned rate would, therefore, be £60, which, plus another £20, makes it £80 for a £20 instrument. If £20 was sent, by permission of the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene), through the Melbourne Post Office, or if a credit was passed through to Great Britain, it would have a purchasing power of £150, so on that basis three pianos could be purchased for what the pre-war price secured one, and a balance would still remain. That is a serious thing, and that is why I am strongly in favour of passing the Tariff so that we can deal with the other very important phase of the question. I believe it is the first time a Minister for Trade and Customs has promised to appoint a Board which will be able to go into the whole matter of Tariff charges. The honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) informed me this evening that we might endow that body with the powers that I understand exist in Japan, to follow up the goods even after they are sold. I have carefully perused the Tariffs in existence in other countries, but I had overlooked that important provision. I have received a communication from Williamsons Limited, but there is one paragraph in their letter which I resent very strongly. It reads—

We have assisted the carbon manufacturers here during the last two years by experimenting with the local products, in order to give them a fair trial. We have pointed out where the difficulties lie, but there has been no improvement in the quality of the carbons. We are quite prepared to give you a practical demonstration by an expert as to the inferiority of the locally-made carbons, and the impossibility of using them on our biographic machines.

These people are quite prepared to accept the money of Australian patrons at their shows, but are so unpatriotic that they do not desire to support Australian manufactures. I would like to see an advertisement displayed on their screen in these words, "Williamsons do not believe in using the carbons produced in



this country." Although these people are personal friends of mine, I feel it my duty as a true Protectionist to place this matter before them. Honorable members will recollect that during recent years the prices of admission have increased considerably, and some companies saved expense by eliminating musicians and placing "hurdy-gurdy machines" in their place.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Williamsons do not do that.

Dr. MALONEY.—Perhaps not. I frequently attend picture shows, and find them interesting and instructive; but I want them to use Australian products. If the firm would exploit Australian pictures, I would be prepared, if they decided to start a factory in order to produce their own goods, to give them every encouragement by way of protective duties. I intend to support the amendment of the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey).

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [8.46].—I hope the Committee will not be influenced by the statement of the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley), to the effect that the Defence and Navy Departments are not using Australian carbons. If those Departments have not done so, and are not doing so, the fact carries no weight as an argument against the quality of the Australian productions. The Postmaster-General's Department uses them, as far as possible, in its activities; and, if we can protect the industry, as the amendment of the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) would do, all the Commonwealth Departments would be able to use these carbons, and they would find that they are of the very highest quality. The industry should have the degree of protection which it so richly earned by supplying Australia's requirements during the war.

Question.—That the words proposed to be inserted (Mr. ANSTAY'S amendment) be so inserted—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	14
Noes	25
Majority	11

## AYES.

Blundell, R. P.	Maloney, Dr.
Charlton, M.	Riley, E.
Cunningham, L. L.	Ryan, T. J.
Fenton, J. E.	West, J. E.
Francis, F. H.	
Hay, A.	Tellers:
Lamond, Hector	Anstey, F.
Makin, N. J. O.	Lazzarini, H. P.

## NOES.

Bell, G. J.	Groom, L. E.
Bowden, E. K.	Jowett, E.
Cameron, D. C.	Lister, J. H.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Mackay, G. H.
Cook, Robert	Rodgers, A. S.
Corser, E. B. C.	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Fleming, W. M.	Smith, Laird
Foley, G.	Stewart, P. G.
Foster, Richard	Wienholt, A.
Gabb, J. M.	Wise, G. H.
Gibson, W. G.	Tellers:
Greene, W. M.	Burchell, R. J.
Gregory, H.	Story, W. H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 182—

Bolts, nuts, rivets, and metal washers, n.e.i.; screws with nuts or for use with nuts; engineers' set screws, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND (Illawarra) [8.54].—I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921—

- (A) Bright finished or milled from the bar, ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 45 per cent.; general, 50 per cent.
- (B) Other, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."

My object in moving for these increases is to give reasonable protection to an industry which has been started in Australia practically since the armistice. The use of automatic machinery for the manufacture of a host of things in England during the war threw upon the market, at the end of the war, great quantities of very valuable machines, some of the best of which were sent out to Australia at very reasonable prices. The result has been that a number of new industries have been established which call for protection now, so that, in a world of keen and open competition, they may have a chance to become established and prosper. Among these is the manufacture of bright finished or milled screws, nuts, and so on. They

are made in quite a different way from the other lines mentioned in the item; and, in the course of their manufacture, the waste of material is so great that the rates of duty which permit the production of those other lines to be carried on successfully are altogether insufficient for this new branch of the industry. Of the steel which goes originally into the factory, only one-third is sent out in the finished article. To put the position in another manner, for every ton of manufactured goods, three tons of raw steel are required. I trust that the Minister will agree to the amendment, since the rates proposed are necessary to preserve an infant industry, which, even in its present state of development, is able to supply the whole of the wants of Australia to-day. Factories have been established in Sydney and in Melbourne. I am not sure that there are others, but I am authoritatively informed that those in existence are able to cater for all local requirements.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.56].—I have looked into this matter, and was prepared to move an amendment which is not exactly on the lines of that of the honorable member for Illawarra. Subject to the withdrawal of his, I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921—Bolts, nuts, rivets, and metal washers, n.e.i.; screws with nuts or for use with nuts: engineers' set screws—

- (A) Bright finished or milled from the bar, ad val., British, 32½ per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.
- (B) Other, ad val., British, 27½ per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."

The effect of my amendment will be similar to that of the honorable member for Illawarra, the only difference being that the rates of duty which I have indicated are not quite as high. I think, however, that they will prove sufficient.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) proposed.

**Mr. STEWART**.—The only purpose of the amendment of the honorable member for Illawarra was to raise the price of the articles.

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND**.—I deny that.

**Mr. STEWART**.—If the amendment was not for the purpose of raising prices, why did the honorable member move it?

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND** (Illawarra) [8.58].—I desire to reply to that interjection, because I wish my constituents to know why I advocate higher duties. The honorable member for Wimmera (**Mr. Stewart**) wishes to know why I moved as I did, if my purpose was not to give manufacturers an opportunity to raise their prices. In regard to nearly every item of the Tariff, I am confronted with the position that, if Australian industry is to have a fair chance, the Tariff must be sufficiently high to keep out the most cheaply produced foreign goods. In order to bring that about, such a Tariff must be imposed as would enable the local manufacturer, if he saw fit, to raise his prices to just below those at which the imported goods would have to be sold to cope with the duties. Thus, the Australian maker could improperly exploit the people. But I know that unless a high Tariff is given, Australia's industries must struggle against a competition which they cannot overcome. I have arrived at the conclusion, therefore, that, in this Tariff, I shall go as far as the Minister is prepared to go in respect of most items, further than the Minister with regard to some, and not at all with him, possibly, concerning some others. Generally, however, I shall go as high as I believe is necessary to give to the local manufacturer a fair chance to capture the whole of the Australian trade. When he secures that trade, he ought to be able to reduce his prices.

**Mr. BRENNAN**.—He will do it without any asking.

**Mr. HECTOR LAMOND**.—If he is a wise man he will do it without any asking, as the honorable member sagely suggests. The biggest industries touched by this Tariff have done it without being asked. I shall extend to every industry which has a reasonable chance of capturing our market an opportunity to do so. If those engaged in these industries fail to act fairly, and this Parliament is always sitting, we shall then have an opportunity of treating our manufacturers as they deserve.

**Mr. GIBSON**.—Then make the duty high enough.



Mr. HECTOR LAMOND. — I will make it high enough to enable the honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Gibson) to sell wheat in Australia continuously at 7s. or 8s. per bushel. I did not notice any reluctance on the part of the honorable member for Wimmera to accept 9s. per bushel for his wheat when he could get it.

Mr. GIBSON.—He did not get it, unfortunately.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND. — He did get it.

Mr. GIBSON.—He did not.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—Then he must manage his business badly. We have to admit that during the war period some manufacturers in this country treated the consumers shamefully, and if a difficulty be experienced to-night in getting justice for the manufacturer, it is because of the action of a very few of their number in extorting from the people the utmost farthing during a time of unparalleled stress. To say that all of our manufacturers did that would be to mislead the Committee.

Mr. STEWART. — And some importers did it, too.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND.—If a comparison is to be instituted between the ability of the local manufacturer and the local importer to impose taxes upon the people, the honorable member has merely to look at the prices which he pays for goods which do not enter into competition with our own manufactures to obtain his answer. If an industry exists in Australia, this Parliament or the State Parliaments have the control of it in their hands. If those who are engaged in it do not "play the game" it is within the power of the Legislature to regulate that industry at every step. For my own part, I prefer to have industries in Australia, where we can control them, to importing goods from other countries whose industries we cannot control.

Question—That the words proposed to be added (Mr. GREENE's amendment) be so added—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes .. ..	26
Noes .. ..	13
Majority .. ..	13

AYES.

Anstey, F.  
Blundell, R. P.  
Cameron, D. C.  
Charlton, M.  
Corser, E. B. C.  
Fenton, J. E.  
Francis, F. H.  
Greene, W. M.  
Groom, L. E.  
Hay, A.  
Lamond, Hector  
Lazzarini, H. P.  
Lister, J. H.  
Mackay, G. H.

Makin, N. J. O.  
Maloney, Dr.  
Moloney, Parker  
Riley, E.  
Rodgers, A. S.  
Ryan, T. J.  
Ryrie, Sir Granville  
Smith, Laird  
West, J. E.  
Wise, G. H.

Tellers:

Burchell, R. J.  
Story, W. H.

NOES.

Brennan, F.  
Cook, Robert  
Fleming, W. M.  
Foley, G.  
Foster, Richard  
Gabb, J. M.  
Gibson, W. G.

Gregory, H.  
Jowett, E.  
Stewart, P. G.  
Wienholt, A.

Tellers:

Bell, G. J.  
Bowden, E. K.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Items 183 (Rivets, bifurcated), 184 (Washers and rivets, copper), 185 (Brake and plough screws, &c.), 186 (Screw hooks, eyes, and rings), agreed to.

Item 187—

Nails, viz.:—

- (A) Saddlers' tacks (not cut) and nails, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent.
- (B) Rail-dogs or brobs, per cwt., British, 4s. 6d.; intermediate, 5s. 6d.; general, 6s.
- (C) Brads (including moulders' and glaziers'); picture nails; spikes; staples; tacks, n.e.i.; wire and other nails, n.e.i.; gimp pins; spouting screws, per cwt. or ad val., British, 5s. 6d., 32½ per cent.; intermediate, 6s. 6d., 40 per cent.; general, 8s., 45 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.
- (D) Horse-shoe nails, per cwt., British, 8s. 6d.; intermediate, 10s. 6d.; general, 12s.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.10].—It will be noticed that there is an alternative *ad valorem* duty provided in this item. This duty was imposed with the intention of providing an adequate measure of protection for certain classes of manufacture outside of wire nails—some of the smaller varieties of nails. We have found, as the result of experience of the operation of the Tariff, that the rate of duty set out in the schedule is unnecessarily high.

Mr. STEWART.—That sounds better.

Mr. GREENE. — It is just as well when we find that we have made too much provision by way of duty to frankly acknowledge it. When I introduced the Tariff I said that we did not suggest that our proposals were counsels of perfection.

Mr. FOLEY.—They were very near to it.

Mr. GREENE.—They were as near to it as we knew how to make them. In the operation of the Tariff it has been found that the present duty is unnecessarily high, and therefore I intend to ask the Committee to agree to a reduction of it and to cut out sub-item D. Accordingly I move—

That sub-item (c) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, per cwt., British, 5s. 6d.; intermediate, 6s. 6d.; general, 8s.; or ad. val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty."

I wish also to add to sub-item D the words—"Up to and including the 15th June, 1921."

The effect of these amendments will be to place horse-shoe nails under the *ad valorem* duty.

Mr. FLEMING.—Will they have the effect of lowering the duty upon horse-shoe nails?

Mr. GREENE.—They will slightly increase the duty upon horse-shoe nails, because we have found that the present duty is inadequate.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The honorable gentleman said that the duty was too high just now.

Mr. GREENE.—But in the schedule as it now stands, the *ad valorem* duty does not apply to horse-shoe nails.

Mr. FLEMING.—So we are going to lame our horses by using bad horse-shoe nails.

Mr. GREENE.—Until a comparatively recent date, the Australian manufacturers were supplying nearly the whole of our Commonwealth requirements in horse-shoe nails. I think that they supplied 90 per cent. of those requirements. But owing to competition from one source and another, they are now quite unable to compete successfully, with the result that they are producing only a very small

proportion of our requirements. Accordingly, we provide for a reduction in the *ad valorem* duty, and propose to bring horse-shoe nails under that duty.

Mr. CHARLTON.—Then the fixed duty upon horse-shoe nails will go out?

Mr. GREENE.—There will be a fixed duty, but it will not apply to horse-shoe nails. The *ad valorem* duty will be applicable to them.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Then the Minister is increasing the duty.

Mr. GREENE.—I have said that in regard to all nails other than horse-shoe nails this will mean a reduction of duty, but that it involves an increase in the duty on horse-shoe nails.

Mr. BELL (Darwin) [9.16].—When the Minister (Mr. Greene) announced that he proposed to move an amendment providing for a reduced duty, I thought the reduction would apply to the duty on horse-shoe nails. I am extremely disappointed that it does not do so. If there is any article in respect of which it is essential we should have the best quality for use, I should say it is horse-shoe nails. While the Minister was speaking, I heard an honorable member interject that the Australian-made article, as usual, was of no value, and it is frequently said that Australians will not use any article made in Australia if they can avoid doing so. Such statements are absolutely absurd, and it should be unnecessary to dwell on them. To say that a farrier objects to use an Australian horse-shoe nail solely on the ground that it is not an imported article is ridiculous. The farriers surely know which is the better article, and I have been assured by a number of them that until quite recently it was almost impossible to obtain a good horse-shoe nail. Those used during recent years have been almost exclusively of Australian manufacture. As the Minister has explained, the imported article is now coming into use again, and the Australian manufacturer finds it hard to carry on against this competition. Unless, however, the Australian manufacturer can make an article equal to that which can be imported, we are not justified in giving him any protection. I regret that the Minister cannot see his way to reduce instead of proposing to increase the protection on



horse-shoe nails. Although not a farrier, I have been compelled occasionally to nail on a horse-shoe, and I know how important it is that only nails of the best quality should be used for such a purpose. I therefore consider that the Minister is scarcely justified in proposing to increase instead of to reduce the protection on horse-shoe nails until he has assured himself that the locally-manufactured article is equal to that which is imported.

**Mr. CHARLTON** (Hunter) [9.19].—Regret has been expressed that the amendment proposed by the Minister (Mr. Greene) does not mean a reduction of the duties under this item. Taking the item as a whole, however, we find that it will mean a reduction, since it will apply to picture nails, spikes, staples, tacks n.e.i., wire and other nails n.e.i., gimp pins, and spouting screws. In respect of all those articles, the duty under the general Tariff will be reduced to the extent of 10 per cent. if this amendment be carried. I should like to know exactly to what class of nails the reduction will apply. For instance, there is the ordinary wire nail used in building operations. Is that nail covered by another item?

**Mr. GREENE**.—No, it is included in this item.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—So that the duty on building nails will be reduced. The proposed reduction may affect the subsidiary industries of the iron works in the Newcastle district to which reference was made on a former occasion. Many of those factories, even with the existing duty, have not been working for eight or ten weeks, so that if the duty is reduced we can say "good-bye" to them.

**Mr. GREENE**.—I am quite satisfied as to the position, so far as wire nails are concerned.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—What about spikes? They are manufactured here, and are used freely throughout Australia.

**Mr. GREENE**.—I am quite satisfied that, so far as the articles enumerated are concerned, the reduced duty will be quite sufficient.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—Having no information to go upon, I thought it well to ascertain exactly what would be the effect of the proposed reduction. If the Min-

ister is satisfied with the position, I have nothing more to say.

**Mr. FLEMING** (Robertson) [9.22].—We are dealing with this item in the wrong way. If the Minister (Mr. Greene) had moved to raise the duty on saddlers' tacks and lines of that kind, and to reduce the duty on horse-shoe nails, there would have been far more reason in his proposal. Inferior saddlers' tacks and brads can do no serious harm, but the use of an inferior horse-shoe nail often leads to the laming of a horse. The Minister, like the rest of us, may some day have a long journey interrupted and the horse he is riding ruined as the result of the introduction of some of these bad nails, which are going to be forced on the community. It is dangerous to restrict in any way the choice of horse-shoe nails. Every man with experience of horses must know that horses have been crippled by the use of inferior nails. I can bear out the statement made by the honorable member for Darwin (Mr. Bell) that one inferior nail is sufficient to ruin the best horse in Australia. The Minister would be well advised if he reconsidered the item. Every farrier likes to have a choice of nails, and different farriers use different brands. If we take away from a tradesman the nails to which he has been accustomed, we may have a number of pricked horses, and a horse with a pricked hoof is often ruined for life. The laming of one good horse a year would involve to the owner a loss greater than the profit which the additional duty will give to the local manufacturer.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.25].—If I thought there was any reasonable ground for supposing that the Australian horse-shoe nail was inferior, I would not ask the Committee to increase the duty on horse-shoe nails. I know as well as does any honorable member who has been in the country that an inferior horse-shoe nail is the last thing you want to meet with on a journey. The position, however, is roughly this: In 1905, a manufacturer of horse-shoe nails here turned out 14,098 boxes, each of 28 lbs. weight. That quantity would shoe a fair number of horses. For a number of years later he turned out well over 10,000 boxes. About 1912, however, competition set in, and last year he turned out only 2,088 boxes

of nails. Here we have an industry which apparently gave to the Australian public complete satisfaction, as shown by its large output for some years. The manufacturer could not maintain his trade for a number of years unless his nails were giving satisfaction; but he now finds it impossible to compete with imports from outside. I am therefore asking the Committee to agree to this additional duty on horse-shoe nails. It will not work out at a much greater rate, but I think it will give that additional protection which will enable the manufacturer once more to carry on his industry.

**Dr. MALONEY** (Melbourne) [9.28].—I hope that the Committee will accept the amendment. The manufacturer referred to by the Minister (Mr. Greene) carries on his industry in the electorate of Bourke, and the figures as to his output are so conclusive that I purpose quoting a few of them. In 1905, this manufacturer sold 14,098 boxes of 28 lbs. each, and thereafter the number of boxes sold by him was as follows:—In 1906, 13,672; 1907, 13,267; 1908, 12,023; 1909, 12,906; 1910, 11,660; 1911, 10,269; 1912, 7,042; 1913, 5,979; 1914, 4,076; 1915, 5,741; 1916, 5,487; 1917, 5,524; 1918, 3,904; 1919, 1,686; and in 1920, 2,088.

**Mr. WEST.**—Did the introduction of motor cars make any difference?

**Dr. MALONEY.**—It must have made a slight difference, as is shown by the fact that omnibus horses have been eliminated in London. I trust that the Committee will accept the amendment of the Minister.

**Mr. BOWDEN** (Nepean) [9.30].—The arguments that have been advanced would be all very well if there had been no increase in the duties, or if, in those years referred to, they had been higher than they are now. I find, however, that in the 1908 Tariff the duties on horse-shoe nails were 7s. 6d. and 8s., whereas now they are 8s. 6d. to 12s. We, therefore, have to look for some other reason for the locally-manufactured article dropping out of use. That cannot be due to the Tariff, because the Tariff has been there all the time; and, apparently, under a lower rate the manufacturers did better than they are able to do now. The real reason, as

already mentioned, is that the quality of the local article is not so good as that of the imported article. Farriers like the best of nails, and if they find that, with the local article they have to use two nails instead of one, and, at the same time, run the risk of crippling the horses, all the duties in the world will not keep such nails in use. The duties of 8s. 6d. to 12s. are extremely heavy, and if the quality of the local article is as good as that of the imported, they have ample protection for the industry. Costs are rising in all directions, and we do not know when this is going to end. The Minister (Mr. Greene) tells us that this schedule was carefully considered and approved by the Cabinet, and that it has been at work for a year and a half, and yet, at the last minute, he proposes amendments which, in nearly every case, have an upward direction.

**Mr. WATKINS** (Newcastle) [9.35].—I think the Minister (Mr. Greene) would be well advised to separate this item of horse-shoe nails, around which, up to the present, the whole discussion has centred, for the effect of his amendment is to alter the whole incidence of the taxation on other nails.

**Mr. GREENE.**—I intended to do that, because we discovered that the duties were higher than they need be.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—Are they higher in this Tariff than in the last?

**Mr. GREENE.**—Yes.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—It happens that a wire-drawing industry in New South Wales, as stated by the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. Charlton), has been closed down for two months on account of the importation of wire of the particular size required for fencing.

**Mr. GREENE.**—Nail-making is still going on, as I saw myself.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—The honorable gentleman saw only one machine working; and I would remind the Minister that the main factory of this company is in Melbourne. We are told by the Minister that the duties proposed will afford ample protection, but we have had no time to consider the facts and circumstances. People have been employed in the industry under the present Tariff, and we are now faced with a proposal that it be reduced. The Minister should tell us why he regards the duties as ample. It



is true that in New South Wales there was one machine going, but the whole work of wire-drawing has ceased.

Mr. GREENE.—The wire-drawing work was not going on.

Mr. WATKINS.—I suggest that the consideration of horse-shoe nails be postponed, or these nails separated from the others with which they are associated. There are proposals by the Minister in this division to which I have no objection; but when we know that the wire-drawing work has ceased—though the nail-making is going on—we ought to be shown the effect of the proposed reduction.

Mr. GREGORY.—The proposal before us is absolutely monstrous.

Mr. GREENE.—I am proposing to reduce the duties on all the items except horse-shoe nails.

Mr. GREGORY.—I mean that it is monstrous to bring horse-shoe nails within this category.

Mr. WATKINS.—However, I suggest a postponement of the consideration of the item of horse-shoe nails, so that we may be in a position to know exactly what we are doing.

Mr. GIBSON (Corangamite) [9.41].—It may seem a simple process to place horse-shoe nails under the *ad valorem* duties, but I point out that at present the duties are 8s. 6d., 10s. 6d., and 12s., whereas in 1914 they were 7s. 6d. and 8s. By the amendment proposed, we shall increase the 8s. 6d. to 21s. per cwt., the 10s. 6d. to 25s. per cwt., and the 12s. to 29s. per cwt., on the assumption that nails are £84 per ton.

Mr. GREENE.—My advice is that the price is £58 per ton.

Mr. GIBSON.—If that be so, it is out of all reason to ask for the proposed duty. I suggest that the item be postponed until we are in possession of further information regarding it. There seems to be some doubt about the price, but I may say that the information I have is from one of the manufacturers through an officer of the Customs Department.

Mr. GREENE.—I agree to postpone the item.

Item postponed.

Item 188 (Ammunition) agreed to.

Item 189 (Arms).

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [9.46].—It would be a pity that this item should be

allowed to go without comment. I have taken very little part in this business of increasing the cost of living during the last few days. It has gone on satisfactorily and pleasantly without my assistance, but for once I should be in favour of a very substantial duty. I should like to move, but I do not say that I will do so, to substitute for the duties mentioned in the schedule duties of, say, 50 per cent. all round without discrimination, with a view to the introduction of subsequent legislation designed to prevent the manufacture of these articles within the Commonwealth. If a satisfactory duty were imposed for the purpose of making it difficult to import them, we might be prepared to deal with the other matter afterwards with an open mind. I leave the question to the Committee in the confident belief that when they see I am favorable to a high duty they will rally round me and give me the support which in the special circumstances I deserve. The item deals with revolvers and pistols, amongst other lethal weapons. It would be fine if we could prevent their importation, and discourage, as far as this Parliament is able to do so, their free and easy use by youths of seventeen and eighteen in the streets of Melbourne. It is becoming so fashionable to carry a gun nowadays, that a man who is not an expert gunman after having gone to the picture shows about a dozen times is not fit to move in polite society in Melbourne, or indeed, I am sure, in any of the other State capitals. The Minister (Mr. Greene) does not seem disposed to tell me to what extent the bayonet industry, for instance, is flourishing in the Commonwealth. I should like to be assured that we have a good stock of bayonets in hand ready for the day on which we shall have really made the world safe for Democracy and reduced armaments to the standard that the allied nations and our late enemies are endeavouring to reach at the present time by vigorous competition in the manufacture of lethal weapons of various kinds. I have at times, with a single or double-barrel gun, done considerable useful execution amongst rabbits and other such game; and, therefore, I do not feel that the duty in the case of those articles should be so high as on others. I hope

that, with the encouraging lead I have now given to the Committee, the Minister will not be afraid to propose an increased duty in this item, because, after all, it is only part of the great scheme of exploiting our unexploited resources, to which he has referred at least 150 times in the course of this inspiring debate. In the circumstances, I hope, therefore, that a substantial duty, yea even a prohibitive duty, will be imposed upon these weapons of destruction, and that we shall then suspend the consideration of the Tariff for a few days for the purpose of passing legislation designed to prevent their manufacture within the Commonwealth.

Item agreed to.

Item 190 (Irons), item 191 (Metal bedsteads, &c.), and item 192 (Brasswork, &c.), agreed to.

Item 193 (Capsules, lead).

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.54].—I propose to make this item cover all capsules, whether of lead or some other metal, when not made here. I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921—

193, Capsules, metallic, for bottles, ad. val. British free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent."

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 194 (Chain and chains).

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [9.55].—I draw the Minister's attention to the big increase in the duty on all chains. I desire to ask him if he is favorable to a considerable reduction. Chains are an essential item for the farmers in the bush. The increase of duty is big, particularly in view of the enormous increase in the cost of all these articles, because an *ad valorem* duty makes the cost ever so much higher. Will the Minister agree to bring the duty back to the old rates of 20 and 25 per cent.?

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.56].—The chain that is dutiable does not include the variety of which the honorable member speaks. I presume he is talking of trace and similar chains.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—My advice was that the item did include them. That is why I spoke.

**Mr. GREENE**.—It does not include trace chains and others of that sort. It takes in heavy chains, which are being made here, and not the light chains to which the honorable member refers. It is not our intention to include them, because they are not made here.

**Mr. BOWDEN** (Nepean) [9.57].—The item would include log-hauling chains, chains for bullock teams, and chains used for cranes. I cannot see any justification for the increase of duty. I understand that the 25 per cent. rate in the old Tariff was satisfactory. I do not know whether the Minister (Mr. Greene) has received applications for these increases, or whether the object is to make the item harmonize with items that we have already passed. Unless there is some explanation of that sort, I do not see why this tremendous increase of duty should be imposed on articles which are absolutely essential to nearly every industry, and especially the primary industries. It will operate on the chains used on tractors and all that class of work. All that will be excluded is the small trace chains for single and double ploughs, and light work of that sort. The duty will be another handicap on the man on the land.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—It will operate on chains used for all mining purposes and all timber purposes.

**Mr. BOWDEN**.—Yes. Unless there is some reasonable explanation from the Minister, which we have not yet had, I do not see why this increase should have been made.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [9.58].—My information is that not one per cent. of these chains are made in Australia. If somebody says that in the dim and distant future he is going to begin to make them in Australia, the duty might be justified, but if we make only one per cent. of them the most rabid high Protectionist in the Committee will not say that these rates are fair. There is no doubt that they will hit the timber industry in particular. They will operate on the chains used by every log-hauling team and appliance, and in crane work, as the honorable member for Nepean (Mr. Bowden) says. In all the heaviest work, steel or iron chains of at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch diameter are used. There is something wrong about the item, or the Minister and his



Department must have received information which has led them to introduce it. It would help us greatly to have that information. In its absence, these seem abnormal duties to put on articles which we have not begun to make here, or which, so far as our knowledge goes, are not likely to be made here for a considerable time.

**Mr. GIBSON** (Corangamite) [10.0].—I should like to point out that machine driving, sprocket and link belting chains, made wholly or partly of malleable cast iron, are largely used in the country, and I do not think they are being manufactured in Australia.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.1].—We are not putting a duty on any chains that are not being made in Australia. In regard to the particular chains mentioned by the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Foley), my information is that one manufacturer alone is employing thirty men, and is turning out between 5 and 6 tons per week, his output including ship steering, mooring, crane, and hauling chains. He has made a number for the Commonwealth Line of Steam-ships. There are also other manufacturers in the Commonwealth. I understand there have been considerable developments in the industry since this Tariff was introduced. A good deal of consideration has been given to this item. I think our manufacturers will be able to supply all our requirements.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—What about the machine driving sprocket and link belting chains mentioned in sub-item B?

**Mr. GREENE.**—They are being made here by the Meadowbank Manufacturing Co., Sydney, and the United Engineering and Malleable Co. Pty. Ltd., Melbourne. The latter company is turning out about 2 tons per week. The Meadowbank Manufacturing Co., of Sydney, are a pretty big concern, and I have no doubt that they are in a position to manufacture a considerable quantity.

Item agreed to.

Item 195 (Ammonia and gas cylinders); and item 196 (Crucibles, metal), agreed to.

Item 197—

(A) Platedware n.e.i.; spoons, forks, and butter, fish, and fruit knives of mixed metalware, platedware, or when partly or wholly of

gold or silver except when having plated or silver ferrules only, ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 50 per cent.

(B) Cutlery, spoons, and forks, n.e.i., and knife sharpeners, including the articles named when having plated or silver ferrules only, ad val., British, 10 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 25 per cent.

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) agreed to—

That sub-item (A) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921—

(A) Platedware n.e.i.; spoons, forks, butter, fish, and fruit knives, plated or of mixed metal; cutlery, spoons, and forks, partly or wholly of gold or silver, except when gold ferruled or silver ferruled only, ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 50 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.6].—I move—

That sub-item (B) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921—

(B) Cutlery, spoons, and forks, n.e.i.; and knife sharpeners, ad val., British, 10 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 25 per cent.; and on and after 1st January, 1922, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 35 per cent."

We are providing for this deferred duty because we believe that spoons, forks, and cutlery will be manufactured in Australia before long. The duty will only be applied in the event of the manufacture being undertaken on a sufficiently large scale to justify its imposition, and the protection, I think, will be sufficient to induce the manufacture on a large scale of the articles referred to. In the actual process there is nothing beyond the capacity of Australian manufacturers, and the industry should give employment to a large number of people, because these articles are required in every household in Australia.

**Mr. BOWDEN.**—Is there any special reason why, in sub-item A, the general Tariff should be 50 per cent? Has there been any capturing of British trade by the American Community Plate?

**Mr. GREENE.**—There has been a considerable increase in importations from countries other than Great Britain. In 1913, out of importations valued at £292,000, Great Britain supplied £247,000 worth; but in 1918-19 the importations

from other countries were over £120,000 in value.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 198 (Diving apparatus), item 199 (Electrotypes and stereotypes), item 200 (Eyelets and eyelet hooks), item 201 (Fasteners, machine belt), item 202 (Thimbles and block fasteners for lasts), and item 203 (Fire extinguishers), agreed to.

Item 204—

Kettles and cooking utensils (but not including stoves) of cast iron (tinned or plain), aluminium or nickel, ad. val., British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 25 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.12].—I wish to make special provision for aluminium or nickel kettles and cooking utensils, as it has been found that the duties on these articles are insufficient to insure the establishment of the industry here. I move, therefore—

That the item be amended by adding the following:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921—

Kettles and cooking utensils (but not including stoves), viz.:—

(A) Cast-iron (tinned or plain), ad val., British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 25 per cent.

(B) Aluminium or nickel, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent."

Since this Tariff was framed there have been considerable developments in the manufacture of aluminium goods in Australia. In 1920 the value of imported aluminium cooking utensils was £45,000; but we believe that by the end of this year the development of the local industry will be such as to be able to provide for the whole of our requirements in this class of goods. The manufacturers state, however, that unless they can get additional protection it will be impossible for them to carry on. I have gone carefully into the item, and I think that, in the circumstances, the duties I am now proposing, while not being very high, will enable the local manufacturers to get a fair share of the Australian trade.

**Mr. BOWDEN** (Nepean) [10.14].—The Minister (Mr. Greene) has just told us that, under the present Tariff, the Australian manufacturers of this class of goods are fast capturing the home market. We may assume, therefore, that the duties are sufficient; but apparently the

Minister argues that, because of that fact, and because the local manufacturers are fast capturing the Australian trade, we should give them more protection. That is the height of absurdity.

**Mr. LAZZARINI** (Werriwa) [10.15].

—I do not oppose the proposed increases of duty, for I do not think the Australian manufacturer of these articles can be said to be taking undue advantage of the protection he has been receiving in the past. In a retail shop in Sydney, I saw two aluminium kettles identically the same. For the American article the salesman asked me 35s. 6d., and for the Australian article 25s. He admitted that the Australian article was as good as, if not better than, the imported one. Although the existing duty is only 20 per cent., the local product was selling at from 33 to 40 per cent. less than the foreign. From what I have seen of locally-made aluminium articles, I think that, in regard to both durability and finish, they are at least as good as the foreign article. This is an industry that should be encouraged.

**Mr. CAMERON** (Brisbane) [10.17].—

Will the Minister (Mr. Greene) include in this item fireless cookers? The fireless cooker is a thermos box made of sheet steel or wood lined with aluminium, and insulated with asbestos. It is, therefore, not a stove. It is manufactured under a patent process, and it would not pay any firm to install a plant for a limited output. I do not think that at present any of these cookers are made in Australia. They are imported under item No. 208, and bear a 45 per cent. duty. They are of great assistance to people who have occasion to be absent from their homes during the day, and who appreciate the convenience of being able to have their meals cooked and kept warm during their absence. I desire these articles transferred from item 208 to item 204.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.18].—This matter has been before me on many occasions. So far as I can see, the fireless cooker is a direct competitor with the metal stove, and the general principle of the Tariff is that substitutes are subject to the same rate of duty as is the article for which they are substituted. I



cannot see my way clear to bring fireless cookers under item 204.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 205—

Steel knives for hand tobacco-cutters and hand tin-openers, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [10.20].—This is one of the most surprising items in the schedule. The Minister (Mr. Greene) proposes to allow tin-openers to be imported free of duty. Here is an opportunity of opening up a new and great industry that will employ hundreds of people. Perhaps because of the unholy combination with honorable members opposite, the Minister would not dare to put a duty on hand tobacco-cutters, but I cannot understand how he has overlooked the possibility of establishing an industry for the manufacture of tin-openers.

**Mr. BOWDEN**.—Will the Minister say why corkscrews were omitted?

**Mr. GREENE**.—A steel knife is not put in a corkscrew.

Item agreed to.

Item 206—

- (A) Lamps and lanterns . . .
- (B) Glass parts of lamps and lanterns when imported separately, and glass parts in excess of one to each lamp or lantern when imported with the lamps or lanterns with which they are designed to be used; mica chimneys and other parts of lamps composed of mica, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.
- (C) Primus and other oil or spirit heating lamps, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.
- (D) Incandescent mantles, ad val., British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.22].—I move—

That sub-item (B) be amended by adding after the words "35 per cent." (general Tariff column) the words "And on and after 16th June, 1921, general, 40 per cent."

The reason for this amendment is that Great Britain has lost a very large proportion of this trade, and I therefore ask the Committee to consent to an increase in the general Tariff.

**Mr. WEST** (East Sydney) [10.23].—On item 192, relating to brass work, bronze work, and gun metal work for general engineering and plumbing, the Committee imposed a general Tariff of 45 per cent. There is not nearly as much workmanship in those materials as there is in lamps employed by plumbers, painters, carpenters, and other tradesmen. Prior to the war, none of these lamps were manufactured in Australia, but now an article is being produced that is so superior that the Government should give the industry every encouragement. The inventors have evolved a true Bunsen burner which develops a heat of 1,200 degrees with a flame that includes 90 per cent. of air. A further advantage in the local article is that the parts are riveted together, and in every respect it is superior to the imported lamp. The industry, however, is menaced by Japanese competition, and the Minister would be well advised if he agreed to increase the duty under the general Tariff to 45 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE**.—I think what I am doing is sufficient.

**Mr. WEST**.—Of course, if the Government have made up their minds in regard to this article, I might as well address my remarks to a brick wall: but that is no proof that the Government are doing the right thing. I know that the people who are manufacturing these lamps in Australia had a hard struggle during the years of war. Having been closely connected with the metal trades, I know that the importers have bled the Australian purchaser more heavily in regard to these items than in connexion with any other imports. These lamps are necessary to various tradesmen, and for their sake, as well as for the purpose of encouraging a local industry, the duty should be increased.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) agreed to—

That sub-item (C) be amended by the omission of the words "Primus and other."

Amendment (by **Mr. WEST**) negatived—

That sub-item (C) be further amended by the addition of the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent."

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.33].—I move—

That sub-item (D) be amended by the addition of the following words:—"And on and after 16th June, 1921, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."

I hope that the Committee will agree to this increase of the rates on incandescent mantles. Owing to the competition of importers, the trade of the local manufacturers of these articles is diminishing, and hands are being turned off. Three firms in Australia make these mantles, one of which expects soon to have an output of 400 gross per week, and another makes 1,736 gross per annum. They are not all conducting their operations in the same way, but they are all actually making mantles. The number of employees in the industry is large, and, as the local manufacturers are able to supply the requirements of Australia, I think that they should be sufficiently protected to allow them to do so.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 207 (Lamps, Miners' safety).

**Mr. CHARLTON** (Hunter) [10.35].—I understand that no miners' safety lamps are made in Australia, and that very few are imported, except from Great Britain.

**Mr. FOLEY**.—Only one kind of lamp comes from the United States of America, and the miners will not use it.

**Mr. GREENE**.—The amount of duty collected under this item last year was only £90, which shows that practically all the lamps used in Australia come from the United Kingdom.

Item agreed to.

Item 208—

Manufactures of metal n.e.i., ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

**Mr. FRANCIS** (Henty) [10.38].—I hope that the Committee will increase these duties. The articles which have been exhibited in the Queen's Hall demonstrate the merits of the Australian workmanship, which is of the highest quality. I should be glad if the consideration of this item could be postponed until to-morrow, so that other honorable members might visit, as I have done, the magnificent works which are being erected in the city of Melbourne for the carrying on of this industry, which, however, needs for its

encouragement more protection than the Minister proposes to give to it. Builders' hardware for brass finishing work is protected to the extent of 35 per cent. British, and 45 per cent. foreign, and during the twelve months these duties have been in operation the local industry has pushed ahead in competition with British and foreign trade, reducing prices considerably, but only enabling a bare profit to be made. However, since the imposition of these duties, an arbitration award has reduced the working hours of the employees, and increased their wages by 20 per cent. We are all agreeable that our industries should pay a wage based on the present high cost of living, but it is not fair to those industries that while the wages of the workers are increased the duties are not also increased, enabling the local manufacturers to compete with foreign manufacturers, who employ cheaper labour. A visit to the factory I have spoken of would convince honorable members and the Minister that more protection is needed.

Progress reported.

## ADJOURNMENT.

CENSUS—THE TARIFF: REAPERS AND BINDERS: ELECTRICAL ACCUMULATORS.

Motion (by Sir JOSEPH COOK) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

**Mr. WISE** (Gippsland—Postmaster-General) [10.48].—I told the honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) this afternoon that I expected to receive the preliminary count of the census to-day. I have it now. It is as follows:—

State.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Increase over 1911 Figures.
New South Wales	1,068,767	1,027,626	2,096,393	449,659
Victoria	753,910	776,204	1,530,114	214,563
Queensland	398,486	357,087	755,573	149,760
South Australia	247,960	246,907	494,867	86,309
Western Australia	175,056	154,172	329,228	47,114
Tasmania	107,602	105,925	213,527	22,316
Totals	2,751,781	2,667,921	5,419,702	969,721

NOTE.—The foregoing figures are exclusive of full-blood aboriginals.

Figures for Territories not yet available.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [10.49].—I take this opportunity of referring to an incident in connexion with the Tariff schedule. This evening, I have been informed by a big manufacturer as to the



arrangement made with him by the Board of Trade, and, presumably, also by the Minister (Mr. Greene) for the manufacture of reapers and binders in Victoria. I am given to understand that negotiations were opened with him by the Board of Trade urging him to make an endeavour to commence the manufacture of these implements, which he had no desire to do, and that, after some pressure upon him, he was given a definite promise by the Board of Trade that if he did so the duties contained in the Tariff schedule would be placed upon reapers and binders. If that is the position, I contend that it was the duty of the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) to bring the matter before Parliament, because one can readily realize how unfair it would be to a manufacturer if representations of that nature were made to him and he expended large sums of money in establishing an industry. It would be very unjust if the promise had been made by an irresponsible body or an irresponsible Minister. The proper course was not adopted, and as a similar instance may arise in the future, this Parliament—because Parliament and its members are pledged—should have the opportunity of expressing an opinion before the Government or a manufacturer is in any way committed. I mention this matter to enable the Minister for Trade and Customs to explain the position.

**Mr. BOWDEN** (Nepean) [10.53].—I desire to make a personal explanation in regard to an item in the Tariff schedule which has been passed by the Committee. The honorable member for Parkes (Mr. Marr), who is at present attending the sittings of the Cockatoo Island Dock Commission in Sydney, asking me to bring before the Committee an amendment to item 180 e, which embodies accumulators for large electrical works. The matter is of considerable importance in connexion with some contracts which were pending, and which have since been cancelled owing to the high duties. These accumulators cannot be manufactured in Australia, and, after consultation with the Minister (Mr. Greene), I was informed that it was intended that they would either be omitted from the item or that a different definition would be submitted which would

cover what was wanted without excluding more than was necessary. When the item in question was under consideration, I was called out of the chamber, and it was passed, so that I have no opportunity of discussing the matter or submitting an amendment. In fairness to the honorable member for Parkes I think it my duty to make this explanation, particularly as I had promised to bring the matter before the Committee. I am to some extent to blame, but the Minister for Trade and Customs must also share a portion of the responsibility, because I had received an assurance from him to the effect that the point I raised would be provided for.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [10.54].—In regard to the point raised by the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory), I desire to say that I informed the Committee when the item was under consideration exactly what had happened. As far as my recollection serves me, the position was this: The Minister for Repatriation (Senator Millen) was looking round for some new industry in which returned soldiers could be employed, and I believe he approached the agricultural machinery section of the Chamber of Manufactures, either directly or indirectly, in an endeavour to arrange for the establishment of an industry in which returned soldiers could be employed. It was out of those negotiations that the proposal arose for the manufacture of reapers and binders, mowers, and hay rakes. The question was submitted to the Board of Trade, so that it might recommend what, in the circumstances, would be a fair rate of duty to impose if that industry were established. It is not correct to say that the Board of Trade promised anything, because it has not any administrative power, and simply acts as an advisory body to the Government in connexion with matters referred to it. The Board of Trade, as such, cannot make any promises, and it did not do so on this occasion.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—I am informed that a promise was definitely made.

**Mr. GREENE**.—The Board of Trade did not make any promise, because it has not the power. It merely submits recommendations. The gentleman referred to

was advised of the position, and that is why I adhered to the duties. The Government assured this person that if he started in the industry they would endeavour to impose certain duties; but it was explained at the time that he would commence operations at his own risk, because the verdict rested with Parliament. It was impossible for the Government to say what the duties would be. All the Government promised, if he started the industry, was to stand by the duties we were proposing; and that is why, after referring to my papers, I found I had to adhere to the schedule.

In regard to the matter mentioned by the honorable member for Nepean (Mr. Bowden), I may explain that for some time past we have been endeavouring to get a definition which would enable us to discriminate between various types of accumulators, but up to the present have been unable to do exactly what we wish. I may inform the honorable member that even if the Tariff goes through in its present form, there are means to do what he wishes if on inquiry we find that these particular accumulators are not made in Australia. I will promise the honorable member that the Government will do one of two things. We will either take action, after satisfying ourselves as to the correct procedure, under item 174 or some similar item, or we will recommit the item to give the honorable member the opportunity he desires.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 10.57 p.m.

## House of Representatives.

Thursday, 16 June, 1921.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER, (Hon. J. M. Chanter) took the chair at 2.30, and read prayers.

### FLOUR EXPORTED TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. MAKIN.—It is stated in the South African newspapers that the sending of unwholesome flour to that country from Australia recently was due, not merely to slipshod methods, but to the

downright dishonesty of the exporters. I ask the Acting Prime Minister if inquiry has been made into the facts, and, if not, I ask that it may be made, so that the prestige of Australian exports may be maintained.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The matter is under very serious consideration. Inferior flour was certainly sent to South Africa, but so far this is one of those cases in which nobody seems to be to blame. We are trying to get to the bottom of it, with a view to doing what the honorable member thinks should be done. I hope he will leave it at that for the moment.

### COCKATOO ISLAND DOCKYARDS.

Mr. WEST.—Yesterday a deputation of unemployed waited upon the Government of New South Wales to ask it for relief, and stated that the unemployment at Balmain is extreme, but that this unemployment could be lessened by the starting of work at the Cockatoo Docks by the Commonwealth Government. Does the Government intend to do anything in that direction?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I understand that orders have been issued for the resumption of work at Cockatoo Island as soon as possible. The recommendation contained in the interim report of the Royal Commission was that the *Adelaide* and another vessel should be completed by the new Board of Control within the terms of their appointment. The members of the Board are now at the Island, or are due there, and the sooner they can arrange to get men back to work the better I shall be pleased.

### DEPARTURE OF BRITISH IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. STEWART.—The following paragraph appears in this morning's *Argus*:—

Probably never before has such a large number of third-class passengers, representing so many nationalities, left Australia as the batch which sailed by the Orient liner *Ormonde* from the new pier, Port Melbourne, yesterday afternoon for London. The steamer carried 900 steerage passengers, and of this number 20 were Indians, 41 Jugo Slavs, 10 Germans, 19 Russians, 1 Dalmatian, 2 Danes, 8 Italians, 1 Spaniard, 10 Greeks, 2 Belgians, and the remainder British. . . . A considerable number of the British passengers were young men, who had served in the



British Army during the war, and had come to Australia in search of employment, but were returning.

I direct special attention to the concluding sentence, which speaks of the number of young Britishers who are returning. The state of affairs disclosed is extraordinary, in view of our recent immigration legislation, and the campaign that has been launched to attract immigrants. Will the Acting Prime Minister cause inquiry to be instituted by the Immigration authorities, with a view to ascertaining the reason for the exodus of young men of whose services the country is so much in need?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I am glad that the honorable member has asked the question, though I should have been better pleased had he given me notice of it. The facts that he has mentioned are serious, and are due, I think, to lack of organization. A number of young men came here from Great Britain, paying their own passages, but no arrangement was made for dealing with them on arrival. It was reported to me by Mr. Gullett, that a number of these immigrants were in very straitened circumstances in Sydney, and it was suggested that the Commonwealth Government should grant money for their relief. I agreed to the expenditure of £5,000, on the condition that the Government of New South Wales should make available the same amount, and wrote a minute for the information of Mr. Hughes—this was before his departure for Great Britain—to the effect that the men should be looked after, and should not be allowed to starve in our cities.

Mr. STEWART.—The return of men like these will kill the immigration campaign in the Old Country.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I agree with the honorable member that it may have a bad effect upon it, and I said so in my minute. The State Government would not make the grant asked for.

Mr. RILEY.—They are spending thousands a week.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Yes; on their unemployed generally. They said that their own unemployed problem was acute, as no doubt it was. And they could not see their way to close with our offer.

Mr. GREGORY.—And all the time the country is clamouring for development.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—That is true, but men may perish where there is plenty if their is a lack of organization, and the trouble now under consideration is due to the failure of organization, to put it mildly.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Who is responsible?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Certainly we are not, except in so far as we are responsible for the general condition of Australia. Nothing was done by the State Government of New South Wales, and last week I heard from the chaplain of one of the big church social organizations in Sydney that he was relieving a number of these immigrants, some of whom had wives and families, and had nothing to eat and no home to which they could go. I have made available to him £1,000 for the relief of those people. The whole scheme needs organization, and the great point is that we should take care that when immigrants come here there is an organization ready to receive them. There again we are up against our own limitations. The arrangement we made at the recent Conference in regard to immigration was that the Commonwealth would take full responsibility for the immigrants at the London end and attend to their passage to Australia, the States, on their part, undertaking to receive and deal with them on arrival, as is already being done by Western Australia and some of the other States. That was the division of work that was agreed upon, and I hope that the arrangement may soon be got into working order. There is, however, some little difficulty with the State Governments.

Mr. STEWART.—There is room for thousands of domestic servants and farm labourers.

Mr. ANSTEY.—We cannot find work for our own men. There are 100,000 men out of work in the Commonwealth.

Mr. STEWART.—There is work for them if they will work the same hours as the primary producer does.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Badly off as we are in regard to unemployment, we are still better off than any other country in the world. We have unemployed in Australia, but there is no country in the

world that has not got them at present, and in very much larger numbers than they are here. This is a temporary difficulty, I hope, and we must try to get over it in the best way we can.

Mr. WIENHOLT. — The unemployed trouble is much deeper than mere lack of organization.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. J. M. Chanter).—Order! This question is developing into an irregular debate.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—It is a very important matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and affects our reputation abroad and our immigration scheme most profoundly. I hope honorable members will believe that with our limitations and all the defects we have at present in regard to this organization, we are doing the best we can. We have the whole matter under review. I have already made £1,000 available for the relief of these cases, and Mr. Gullett is now at work upon this very problem, and I hope we may soon find some solution for it. Meanwhile, he is developing his organization. It has been already launched in Victoria with very good prospects, and I see that a similar organization has been launched in Sydney last Monday. I had promised to be present, but was unable to leave Melbourne. We are doing all we can to get the organization under way, but the obligation is on the States to undertake responsibility at this end, while we undertake the responsibility in London. If the States will not take the responsibility here we must, and will. In the meantime, I agree that, in our present circumstances, we shall do well to encourage the immigration of domestic servants and nominated immigrants. The latter is the best of all forms of immigration, because when the people arrive here after having been nominated by their friends, there is a place to which they can go and get something to eat until they can shift for themselves. That class of immigration is being developed already, and we expect 30,000 or 40,000 new arrivals next year through this medium alone. But that is only a trickle, and we must look to the larger tide of immigration in the immediate future.

Mr. CHARLTON.—In view of his statement that the immigration organization is not complete, and having regard to the fact that thousands of men are

unemployed in the different States, necessitating heavy calls on all the Governments, will the Acting Prime Minister take into consideration the advisability of at once informing the immigration officials abroad that because of the position here immigration activity should be deferred for the time being?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—No; I will not.

#### ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION.

Mr. FENTON.—Whilst I realize that the electoral provisions of the Constitution can be amended only by the people themselves, I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether, prior to the redistribution of seats in accordance with the new proportions of population in the different States, he will afford the House an opportunity of discussing what is known as the formula for ascertaining the quota, which is pronounced by experts to be altogether ineffective and inequitable. If that is done, I am certain the House will do no injustice to any State. All I am asking for is a fair deal for all the States, so that we may arrive at a formula that will be just to all concerned.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—In my simplicity, I was not aware that there was anything occult, complex, or extremely difficult in ascertaining the quota for the electorates throughout the Commonwealth. I should think there would be no trouble about that, and I ask the honorable member to indicate where the difficulty lies.

Mr. FENTON.—If the Acting Prime Minister will inquire of the experts in connexion with the Department or the Minister presiding over it, I think he will be told that there are some inequalities in the present system.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I shall certainly ask my colleague to make inquiries at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. GREGORY.—Do the Government intend to appoint immediately under section 13 of the Electoral Act a Commission for altering and defining the boundaries of constituencies?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—So far only an interim report upon the census has been made. The figures have still to be checked, so that it may be some little time before the final report is made, but immediately that comes to hand the matter



to which the honorable member has referred must command the serious attention of the Government.

## NEWSPAPER REFLECTIONS ON MEMBERS.

### ILLNESS OF DR. EARLE PAGE.

Mr. WEST.—Paragraphs appear in each Melbourne morning paper reflecting on some honorable members of this House. I would like to know whether there is any means by which honorable members who leave their party at critical moments and fail to support their leader may be called to account?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—With the honorable member's long experience of caucus methods, which, of course, are up to date, no doubt, he could enlighten the House upon many ways in which this could be done, and I suggest that some day when there is not much business of importance to be transacted he might do so.

Mr. GREGORY.—By way of personal explanation, I would like to say in reference to certain criticisms directed towards the Leader of the Country party (Dr. Earle Page) that his absence from the House is due to illness.

## PREFERENCE TO RETURNED SOLDIERS.

### POSITION OF MERCHANT SERVICE MEN.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

1. If men who won the Merchant Service War Badge with the words "For service rendered by sea," and who underwent such great danger, are debarred from the preference given to returned soldiers when seeking Government work? If so, cannot this be amended?

2. Will he bring this matter before the Cabinet?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Members of the Merchant Service Marine are not eligible for the preference in employment provided under the Commonwealth Public Service Act for returned sailors and soldiers.

2. I see no objection to doing this.

## BURNETT LANDS.

Mr. CAMERON asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. Did the Government of Queensland formally apply for a loan of £2,000,000 from

the Commonwealth Government for the purpose of developing the Burnett Land Settlement Scheme?

2. If so, upon what date?

3. Has the Commonwealth Government considered the matter and arrived at a definite decision with regard thereto?

4. If so, has that decision been officially conveyed to the Government of Queensland?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—In all the correspondence and records of conferences I have seen, not only was there no promise made by the Prime Minister of monetary assistance for the development of this Burnett land scheme, but, on the contrary, there was a very definite statement by him that only in connexion with the further development of the Murray waters scheme, and the alteration of railway gauges to a uniform gauge, did the Commonwealth propose to give aid to the States in connexion with immigration schemes. Everthing else was specifically excluded from the range of that aid. The honorable member will see all this in the following lengthy summary of what has taken place in connexion with the matter:—

### IMMIGRATION AND LAND SETTLEMENT.

#### *Premiers' Conference, May, 1920.*

At the Premiers' Conference, held at Melbourne during the month of May, 1920, the following resolutions were carried:—

*Resolved:* "That the proposals of the Prime Minister as follow:—

Commonwealth to have full control overseas;

Agents-General of the several States to form consultative committees in London;

Commonwealth to be responsible for, and have control of, all overseas organizations and transport arrangements for bringing immigrants to Australia;

Primary object of scheme to be the settlement of immigrants on the lands of Australia;

Type of immigrant—preference to be given to British ex-service men, Commonwealth to seek co-operation and assistance of British Government in obtaining right type of immigrant and of passages for same;

Commonwealth to assume financial responsibility for organization for immigrants from overseas and transport to Australia;

The States to be responsible for immigrants from arrival in Australia, and for their settlement on suitable lands and/or employment on public works;

States to enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth, setting out in definite terms what they bind themselves to do in regard to providing—

(a) land;

- (b) other forms of assistance, such as depôts, sustenance, general care of immigrants, employment on public works, particularly on unification of railway gauge and Murray Waters scheme, &c.—

for (1) ex-service men;

(2) other classes of immigrants;

be approved by the Conference, with the following additions:—

Commonwealth and States to co-operate and consult from time to time as to the number of immigrants who can be absorbed in the respective States, and the class of immigrants required.

The Commonwealth undertakes to assist the States by way of loans for approved land settlement and public works."

*Resolved:* "That the Premiers undertake to submit the scheme for consideration by the respective State Cabinets."

The Prime Minister, together with other Commonwealth Ministers, attended the Conference on the 24th May, when the proposals of the Commonwealth Government with regard to immigration were placed before the Conference by Mr. Hughes.

During the course of the debate, Mr. Hughes said—

"I must not be held to commit the Commonwealth to that proposal, if it is to be considered as part of the scheme, so that the scheme is itself contingent upon it. All that I say is this: That the scheme itself is limited clearly in the most definite way, and is under your control, because you are to say how many men you can absorb, and what kind of men. Having agreed to that proposal, with that first addendum, if you ask, 'Are you prepared to consider the question of advancing loans for the purpose of this scheme on public works approved by you?' I say, 'We are prepared to consider it; but we do not say with regard to public works other than the Murray River and the unification of railway gauge that we will provide the money.' In regard to the unification of gauge, we do say that we will provide the money. As far as developmental railways are concerned, I may remark that I shall look very favorably on them, because I do not think we can spend our money in any better way."

#### *Premiers' Conference, July, 1920.*

At a further Conference, held at Melbourne during the period 16th to 20th July, 1920, between the Commonwealth and State Ministers, the proposals outlined in the first resolution with regard to immigration passed at the former Conference were re-affirmed, and the Conference decided that a scheme should be drawn up by the Commonwealth and submitted to the State Governments for approval.

With regard to the second addendum to the first resolution, however, the Prime Minister stated that the Commonwealth Government would not undertake to give any assistance

except in respect of the Murray River waters scheme and the construction of a uniform railway gauge throughout Australia.

During the debate in connexion with this matter, Mr. Fihelly asked the Prime Minister what money would be made available for public works?

Mr. Hughes replied that the Commonwealth Government was prepared to co-operate in all these public works undertakings to the extent of the mutual resources of the Commonwealth and State, but it could not go beyond that. He stated that the Murray Waters Scheme could be expedited, the Unification of the railway gauges undertaken, also any other public works that might be suggested, and upon which agreement might be arrived at. He also stated that the Commonwealth was prepared to co-operate to the fullest extent, because immigration was essential to the welfare and safety of Australia.

Mr. Fihelly then pointed out that Queensland offered exceptional facilities for the settlement of the largest number of immigrants, and added that the Murray Water Scheme did not interest Queensland as a State. He intimated also that the same applied to the Unification of the railway gauges, because that would merely connect Brisbane with the border.

Mr. Hughes agreed that Queensland and Western Australia offered greater facilities than the other States for the settlement of the largest number of immigrants, but added—"In regard to public works we must cut our coat according to our financial cloth."

#### *Premiers' Conference, November, 1920.*

At a Premiers' Conference held at the Prime Minister's Office on the 1st November, 1920, Mr. Theodore said—

"We could absorb straightway a few thousands of immigrants if we had the money to carry out our proposals. We want assistance financially."

Mr. Hughes replied—

"I do not know to what extent we can do that. You know the state of the money market. I do not know what we can do. You (Mr. Theodore) said the Burnett district wants £2,000,000 spent on it. . . . We have got to do something. I have done the best I can. We must carry out that scheme. We cannot settle it now, but this general conversation helps."

#### *Mr. Fihelly's Inaccuracy.*

Mr. Fihelly, in May, 1921, stated that a promise was given at the July Conference between Federal and State Ministers that money would be advanced by the Commonwealth Government in connexion with the Burnett lands.

The answer to this assertion is summed up in the explicit statement by the Prime Minister "that the Commonwealth Government would not undertake to give any assistance except in respect of the Murray River Water Scheme and the construction of a uniform gauge."

This had reference solely to immigration proposals.



Regarding soldier settlement, Mr. Fihelly (at the July Conference) asked—

“What about Queensland’s Upper Burnett railway proposition?”

To which Senator Millen replied—

“That will come out of the £1,000 if the line is agreed to.”

This £1,000 was the amount to be paid in respect of each settler, £625 being secured to the settler himself and the £375 being available to the States for the purpose of providing land.

Nothing as said that could be construed into a promise “that money would be advanced by the Commonwealth Government in connexion with the Burnett lands.”

On the 15th November, 1920, Mr. Theodore wrote to the Prime Minister, stating that the ability of Queensland to absorb any number of immigrants depended upon the opening of further areas of land therein for settlement. He stated that there was a large tract in the Northern Burnett and Callide Valley districts suitable for close occupation, on agricultural areas, of many thousands of selectors, but that about £2,000,000 would be required for railway and road construction to adapt it for such purposes. This work would extend over three or four years, but, in the meantime, 1,500 men would be employed on the construction as soon as money was available. He added that if the Commonwealth Government would grant the State a loan of £2,000,000, to be used for the above purpose only, and to be drawn on as required, the Queensland Government could make a concrete proposal with regard to immigration.

The Premier further suggested that Mr. Gullett, Director of Immigration, proceed to Queensland and go fully into the matter with the State authorities.

In reply to that letter, the Premier of Queensland was informed that Mr. Gullett would inspect the areas in question early in the year 1921, and, further, that as soon as the report in the matter had been received the request for financial assistance would receive full consideration.

#### *Queensland's not Unnatural Desire.*

Queensland representatives have expressed a not unnatural anxiety to receive some indication tending to justify the hope that undeveloped parts of their richly-endowed State might be made more accessible to new settlers. The Commonwealth Government sincerely desired to formulate some plan that could be initiated on practical and financially sound lines. This much was indicated by the Prime Minister at the commencement of the negotiations with the Government of the Northern State. The Superintendent of Immigration was sent to Queensland to report on the value of the Burnett country as a district for settlement. He carried out this duty, and the report was printed for the information of honorable members.

This action appears to be accepted by some critics as an admission on the part of the

*Sir Joseph Cook.*

Commonwealth Government that it was committed to a scheme involving a loan of £2,000,000 to the Queensland Government.

The facts of the case surely demand no elaborate explanation. Queensland asked for £2,000,000 to be used in opening up undeveloped country. Admittedly, this was an admirable objective. But the Commonwealth Government desired to learn full details regarding the advantages to be gained in allotting £2,000,000. This would have been a natural procedure, even had the Commonwealth Government held ample funds for general purposes. But with a Treasury meeting heavy demands of an abnormal character, finance duly dominated the position.

The importance of the opportunity for development in the Burnett district has never been questioned—it cannot be questioned. But the fact cannot be ignored that Queensland is a State in which established railways cover wide areas of rich country, in which there is ample space open to prospective settlers.

The Commonwealth Government regrets that it is not able to comply with the request submitted by the Queensland Government at the present time, as money is not available for the purpose.

### REPATRIATION EFFORTS.

#### EXPENDITURE ON RE-AFFORESTATION.

Mr. CORSER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Repatriation, *upon notice*—

1. What is the total amount of money set aside for all States for the purpose of giving employment to returned soldiers in connexion with re-afforestation?

2. What portion of the amount has been drawn up to date by the Queensland Government for this purpose?

Mr. RODGERS.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. £70,000.

2. £29,413 12s. 9d.

### MANDATED TERRITORY.

#### ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. GIBSON (for Dr. EARLE PAGE) asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Have the Government yet formulated a policy with regard to the administration of the various territories and mandated islands; if so, when is such policy to be applied?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The question asked by the honorable member is of so general a character as to make a definite reply difficult. Civil administration was introduced in the mandated territory as from the 12th May, 1921, and the many important phases of administration which

have arisen are at present under consideration by the Government.

## NATURALIZATION OF GERMANS.

Mr. GABB asked the Minister for Home and Territories, *upon notice*—

1. Has the embargo against persons of German origin obtaining certificates of naturalization been removed?

2. If so, are persons of German origin now on the same footing as other European aliens in the matter of obtaining certificates of naturalization?

Mr. WISE (for Mr. POYNTON).—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. Yes.

2. Yes..

## PAPUA.

### EXPORT DUTIES.

Dr. MALONEY asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

1. Was 2d. a lb. export duty placed on peanuts, and also 25s. a ton export duty on copra, in Papua?

2. Will he inform the House if there are any other export duties in Australia and its dependencies?

3. If so, will he ask the Cabinet to consider the removal of such burdens upon primary production?

Mr. GREENE.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. There is no export duty on peanuts exported from Papua, but there is an export duty of 25s. per ton on copra.

2. There are no export duties on goods exported from Australia. The export duty on copra is the only export duty imposed so far as the dependencies are concerned.

3. The Commonwealth Government have no intention of imposing export duties on any primary products exported from Australia. So far as Papua is concerned, the question is one with which the local Government is concerned.

## IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

Mr. GIBSON (for Dr. EARLE PAGE) asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

In view of the information in the cablegram published in Melbourne newspapers, that Dr. Butler, of the Columbia University, has been asked to lecture at the Imperial Conference on constitutional problems, have the Government any information that the question of an Imperial Constitution will be discussed at the Conference; and, if so, has that information been received since the Prime Minister's departure?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—According to the public press, this statement has proved to be incorrect concerning Dr. Butler, whom I met when passing through America; but I would like to say very emphatically—and it is necessary in view of what is being said in the papers, and in view of the demand in some quarters that something ought to be done—that the Government have no information on these matters other than that which has already been communicated to the House.

## PRICE OF NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. HECTOR LAMOND asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

1. Has newsprint fallen in value from £76 per ton to £35 or less per ton?

2. If so, has the Melbourne Age recently increased its price to twopence per copy, thus imposing a tax of some £85,000 per annum upon its readers in addition to a similar imposition made in war time?

3. Has the Melbourne Argus also recently increased its charge to twopence per copy?

4. Will he consider the advisableness of diverting these excessive charges to a useful public purpose by imposing a tax of one half-penny per copy upon twopenny daily papers, and thus provide ample funds to enable the Seat of Government to be transferred to Canberra within three years?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. There has been a considerable reduction in the price of newsprint, which closely approximates that set out.

2 and 3. I understand the price of both the Melbourne Age and Melbourne Argus has recently been increased as stated. I am not in a position to say whether, having due regard to the publishers' costs, the increase is excessive.

4. See answer to questions 2 and 3.

## PUBLIC SERVICE.

### RETIRING AGE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN OFFICERS.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

Whether the Government has considered the judgment of the High Court concerning the rights of South Australian officers transferred to the Commonwealth Public Service, in the matter of age retirement; and what action does the Government propose to take in regard to past and prospective retirements of such officers?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The judgment of the High Court was only delivered on the 14th June, and the Government have not yet had an opportunity to consider the matter.



## NAURU ISLAND PHOSPHATES.

Mr. MACKAY asked the Acting Prime Minister, *upon notice*—

1. What amount of money has been paid by the Government for the Australian interest in the phosphate deposits in Nauru and Ocean Island?

2. How many tons of phosphate have been landed in Australia to date, and what is the average price received for same?

3. Have the importations from Nauru decreased the price of phosphates in Australia?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. The Commonwealth has paid the sum of £1,483,230.

2. For the first six months of control by the British Phosphate Commission, being the period in respect of which figures are available, 120,000 tons. The average price received was 78s. 6d. per ton.

3. Not yet; but a reduction in the price of phosphate delivered in Australia is expected during next year.

## CENSUS.

Mr. WISE.—I have received further preliminary figures in relation to the recent census. The following statement shows the decennial increase of population in each of the Australian States since 1881;—

AUSTRALIAN POPULATION: DECENNIAL INCREASE IN EACH STATE SINCE 1881.

State.	Decen- num, 1881-91.	Decen- num, 1891-1901.	Decen- num, 1901-11.	Decen- num, 1911-21.
<i>Numerical Increase.</i>				
New South Wales	374,129	230,892	293,602	449,659
Victoria ..	278,274	61,230	114,481	214,563
Queensland ..	180,193	104,411	107,684	149,760
South Australia	39,119	42,813	50,212	86,309
Western Australia	20,074	134,342	97,990	47,114
Tasmania ..	30,962	25,808	18,736	22,316
Six States com- bined ..	922,751	599,496	682,705	969,721
<i>Increase Per Cent.</i>				
New South Wales	49.90	20.54	21.67	27.31
Victoria ..	32.30	5.37	9.53	16.31
Queensland ..	84.39	26.52	21.62	24.72
South Australia ..	14.15	13.57	14.01	21.12
Western Australia	67.67	269.86	53.22	16.70
Tasmania ..	26.76	17.60	10.86	11.67
Six States com- bined ..	41.07	18.91	18.10	21.79

In all the States except Western Australia the increase was greater both numerically and relatively during the decennium 1911-21 than during the decennium 1901-11.

In two of the States, viz., New South Wales and South Australia the increase during 1911-21 was numerically greater than in any other decennium during the last 40 years, while in the cases of Victoria and Queensland the increase during 1911-21 was numerically greater than in any other decennium during the last 30 years.

## PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Arbitration (Public Service) Act—Determination by the Arbitrator, &c.—No. 3 of 1921—In the matter of the Commonwealth Medical Quarantine Officers' Association.

Public Service Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1921, Nos. 89, 102, 107.

## TARIFF.

*In Committee of Ways and Means:*

Consideration resumed from 15th June (*vide* page 9093).

DIVISION V.—METALS AND MACHINERY.\*

\*Motive power, engine combinations, and power connexions are dutiable under their respective headings when not integral parts of machines, machinery, or machine tools.

Item 208—

Manufactures of metal, n.e.i., ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

Mr. FRANCIS (Henty) [3.0].—

When the discussion on this item was adjourned last night I was directing attention to the necessity of further protecting this industry, and I advised honorable members to inspect the factory which has recently been erected in Melbourne. I have again visited the plant, and am impressed even more than I was on my first visit with its possibilities. In view of the unemployment prevalent in our midst I am hopeful that it will be possible for the Government to provide adequate protection for this industry, because I have been assured that if it is forthcoming, this company will be prepared to employ 500 hands in connexion with the manufacture of metal. For the information of honorable members who were not in the chamber when the House adjourned, I desire to again direct attention to the interesting specimens of work exhibited in the Queen's Hall, which have been manufactured from raw material produced in Australia, prepared by Australian workmen, and, in many cases, treated by Australian machinery. An inspection of the factory will show that work of a highly satisfactory character is being performed by machines manufactured in Sydney. Articles of various sizes can be manufactured, and in the hope that adequate protection would be provided under the Tariff this firm has erected a factory covering, approximately, 2 acres,

at a cost of between £20,000 and £30,000. The building has been erected on modern lines, and the company only need fair protection to enable it to prosper.

Dr. MALONEY.—What is the name of the firm?

Mr. FRANCIS.—Sturtevant, Bedford, Proprietary Limited, of Lonsdale-street. The firm is now occupying small premises, but hopes shortly to be occupying the new building which I have mentioned. If this and other industries are given sufficient protection there will be no necessity for sending away from this country hundreds of passengers who have arrived from the Old Country, as we have heard of to-day. I am continually being interviewed by men seeking employment, and if our Australian industries are adequately protected these men will easily be absorbed. Since the present duties were imposed an award of the Arbitration Court has increased the wages bill by 20 per cent., and has also reduced the number of working hours. I do not desire at this juncture to discuss Arbitration Court awards, but I am convinced that until the cost of living is reduced wages must remain as they are to-day. When the machinery is installed, approximately £100,000 will have been invested in this particular industry, and it is only fair that the Government should come to its aid. Australian metals are used in the production of builders' brassware. The copper comes from Mount Lyell, the spelter from Broken Hill, the sheet brass from the Colonial Ammunition Company, and the tin from Mount Bischoff. All the machinery is manufactured in Australia. Quite recently the Repatriation Department called for tenders for 12,000 locks for War Service Homes, and, so far as one can gather, orders for only 600 were placed with Melbourne manufacturers. The bulk of the requirements in this direction were purchased from importing houses, which is conclusive proof that the present duties are inadequate.

Mr. WATKINS.—Was there any great difference in the price?

Mr. FRANCIS.—Those who are conducting this industry are quite prepared to invest more capital if the present duty is increased by 10 per cent. Quite recently

importing firms placed orders with Japan. I have no interest whatever in this industry, and there are no factories in my constituency. I produce for the information of honorable members an article made in Japan, and one of similar type manufactured in Australia.

Mr. WATKINS.—Is that the stuff they are putting into the War Service homes?

Mr. FRANCIS.—I do not know whether the Department is equipping the soldiers' homes with Japanese furnishings; but I do know that, out of 12,000 lock sets for which tenders were invited by the War Service Homes Branch, only 600 were purchased from the Melbourne makers.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Where were the others made?

Mr. FRANCIS.—Overseas.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—That is scandalous.

Mr. FRANCIS.—I have these two locks before me. In comparing them, the man in the street, without practical knowledge, would say that the Japanese lock appeared to be all right, and was good enough. But the man who knows would compare the finish of the two. He would note the superiority of the Australian article, and perceive its greater durability. Price, however, would be the appealing factor with the uninformed individual. Naturally, the Japanese article is the cheaper, considering that the item of wage cost is almost negligible as compared with the same in Australia.

Mr. RILEY.—What is the difference between the prices?

Mr. FRANCIS.—I have not that specific information; but the Japanese lock costs very much less. Having had twenty-five years' experience in the building trade, I can say, although I do not set up to be an expert, that there is vastly greater value in the Australian product. That, however, would not appeal to the average individual. Price, I repeat, would be the main consideration.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—If they put these Japanese lines into the War Service homes, they will fly the good old flag over them, and that will make everything all right.

Mr. FRANCIS.—If that is to be the purpose for which our flag is to be employed, I shall have no time for it. But



I stand up for my country all the time, and every time, with Japan and every other country nowhere. I consider the desire of the Australian makers for a 10 per cent. increase in the duties extremely moderate and altogether reasonable. A Melbourne importing house recently sent a sample of the Australian product to Japan, and asked the foreign makers to imitate it as closely as possible, and forward a "quote." I emphasize that the wage cost in Japan is almost nothing, and that thus the foreign makers have an enormous advantage. But we must keep out these cheap Japanese goods if we are to foster the best interests of our own country. I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, ad val., British, 45 per cent.; intermediate, 50 per cent.; general, 55 per cent."

**Dr. MALONEY** (Melbourne) [3.15].—I hope the Minister will accept the amendment. I thank the honorable member for Henty for having moved it, and for having so ably stated the case for the Australian makers. Having inspected the samples, I noticed an undoubted similarity, but I point out that the play of the Australian lock is more facile than that of the Japanese; also, that the spring which holds the bolt of the local product in place is of brass, in keeping with the material of which the lock is made, whereas, in the Japanese bolt, the spring is of a cheaper metal. I can appreciate that there is bound to be a considerable difference in the selling price. I wish to say, by the way, that in my criticisms, I do not desire to disparage Japan. Its people are the most artistic race the world has ever known. At the same time, our duty, as representatives of a white race, is first to Australia; and, even if the price of the imported line were less than half of that of the local production, we should support the Australian industry. One tremendous factor calling for our support is that all the material in the Australian lock is from Australian sources, that the machinery employed is Australian made, and that the workmen are Australians.

With respect to the furnishing of War Service homes, Mr. McKenzie, the president of the Melbourne branch of the Returned Soldiers Association, made

known to the public some time ago that the incandescent lamps which had been used in connexion with the electrical installations in soldiers' homes had been made in China. That assertion was contradicted by the head of the War Service Homes branch; Mr. McKenzie was told plainly that he was a perverter of the truth. Unfortunately for the veracity of the highly-placed Government official concerned, Mr. McKenzie had some of these lamps in his own possession. An order was issued by the War Service Homes branch for the return of all the Chinese lamps, but some of them were not given up. They were missed, and their return was demanded. The lamps were only given up, however, upon the Department issuing a receipt bearing the words to the specific effect that the lamps were "Made in China." In the light of that incident one can understand that the War Service Homes Department would readily equip the soldiers' homes with Japanese goods.

If honorable members care to examine the display board in the Queen's Hall, which contains numbers of bolts, among other things, they will be convinced that, since Australian factories can turn out such products, the makers deserve to be encouraged, not merely by 10 per cent. increases in the duties, but by even more.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [3.20].—In the first place, this item deals with manufactures of metals *n.e.i.*, and certainly covers the particular articles to which the honorable member for Henty (Mr. Francis) has referred. But I should be extremely sorry to be put through a catechism as to the additional articles which it covers. It embraces an immense range of articles, which vary both in the degree of manufacture that is involved in them and also in their values. The particular subject of the honorable member's remarks was brassware of one kind or another. I hope that he does not forget that very nearly as much labour is involved in the making of a steel bolt as is involved in the making of a brass bolt. It is true that there is a greater amount of labour requisite in the manufacture of a brass bolt than there is in the manufacture of an iron bolt, but the *ad valorem* duty in both cases is the

same. The duty upon the brass bolt, however, represents a far greater measure of protection than it does upon the iron bolt, because we have to consider the value of the metal used in each instance, and we all know that the value of the metal used in the manufacture of a brass bolt is very much higher than is the value of the metal used in the manufacture of an iron bolt. The same remark is applicable to the still higher processes of manufacture. In the case of goods from foreign countries, the duty proposed, namely, 45 per cent., would be very high if we added 10 per cent. to it. I cannot see my way to increase the existing impost. If honorable members will look at the item, they will see that the duty upon it has been increased from 30 per cent. under the 1908 Tariff, to 45 per cent. under this Tariff. In all the circumstances the duties proposed appear to be sufficient to afford our local manufacturers a reasonable chance of competing successfully with the manufacturers overseas. I know that the industry is almost an entirely new one. Prior to the war its operations were almost of a negligible character, but since then it has made wonderful strides in many directions, not merely in the manufacture of the articles of which the honorable member for Henty has spoken, but also in the manufacture of locks. Then there is the brass metal, and other metal industries which are being established all over the country. It seems to me that the duties set out in the schedule are quite sufficient to enable our manufacturers to successfully carry on their operations. I ask the honorable member for Henty to accept those duties, because they cover a vast number of articles other than those which he has enumerated.

**Mr. FENTON** (Maribyrnong) [3.24].—I regret that the Minister cannot accede to the request of the honorable member for Henty (Mr. Francis), although I recognise the difficulty in which he finds himself owing to the general character of this item. "Manufactures of metal n.e.i." covers a very numerous class of articles, but I have always been under the impression that importations from other countries bear the name of their country of origin.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—That is insisted upon by the State.

**Mr. FENTON**.—I do not know whether that is so, or whether the matter is subject to our Customs regulations; but a quantity of bolts may be imported from Japan, and the box containing them may have printed across it the words, "Made in Japan." When those bolts have been taken out of the box, the public is absolutely ignorant of their country of origin.

**Mr. STEWART**.—The honorable member is quite right. They ought to bear the name of their country of origin.

**Mr. FENTON**.—During the summer I had occasion to look out for a bathing costume, and accordingly visited a draper's establishment for the purpose of buying one. I selected one which was rather to my liking from a colour-point of view, but upon closely examining it I discovered that it had been made in Japan. That was sufficient warrant for its rejection.

**Sir ROBERT BEST**.—The branding of all goods with the name of their country of origin does not come within the provisions of the Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act.

**Mr. FENTON**.—I think that Australian purchasers should be protected, because bolts, for example, may be sold by the gross, by the hundred, or by the thousand, and they may be palmed off as having been manufactured in Australia when, as a matter of fact, they have been made in Japan.

**Mr. FRANCIS**.—The Australian bolt is branded.

**Mr. FENTON**.—It only bears its name. The Minister has confessed that he was almost ashamed to say that our Australian manufacturers are frequently asked to keep the brand, "Made in Australia," off the articles which they produce, because of the public prejudice against goods of local manufacture. Unfortunately that is true. If we have no regulations under which imported articles must bear the name of their country of origin, it is time that our Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act was amended in that direction.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [3.28].—Section 7 of the Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act provides—

1. The regulations may prohibit the importation or introduction into Australia of any specified goods unless there is applied to them a



trade description of such character relating to such matters, and applied in such manner as is prescribed.

That provision enables us to prescribe, amongst other things, that such goods shall bear the name of their country of origin, and, as a matter of fact, we do so prescribe in so far as the Act enables us to do so. But section 15 of the same Statute says—

Sections 7 and 11 of this Act shall not apply to any goods other than—

- (a) articles used for food or drink by man, or used in the manufacture or preparation of articles used for food or drink by man; or
- (b) medicines or medicinal preparations for internal or external use; or
- (c) manures; or
- (d) apparel (including boots and shoes) and the materials from which such apparel is manufactured; or
- (e) jewellery; or
- (f) seeds and plants.

These are the limitations imposed by the Act. If anything be placed upon these goods descriptive of what they are, under our regulations they must also bear the brand of the country of their origin. But we cannot insist upon all goods being so marked. However, the Government have under consideration at the present time a proposal to amend the Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act, with a view to making it applicable to all imported goods, and specifying that such goods shall be marked with the name of the country of their origin.

**Sir ROBERT BEST** (Kooyong) [2.30].—I am very glad that the Minister for Trade and Customs has intimated the intention of the Government to amend the Act in question. As I interjected when the honorable member for Maribyrnong (Mr. Fenton) was speaking, I do not think that that Statute applies to the case to which he has referred, and, as a result, the Australian article has suffered severely. The intention of the Commerce Act was to enlighten the public as to what they were buying, and there is ample room for a substantial extension of it, so as to cover cases of this kind. I regret, with some of my honorable friends who have addressed the Committee, that the Minister (Mr. Greene) cannot see his way to give some further assistance to this industry. He has rightly said that this particular item, "Manufactures of metal n.e.i.," has a vast range. I admit

that it has, and from that stand-point his argument is difficult to answer. If, however, the honorable gentleman is satisfied that any department of industry, such as that of brassware, covered by the item is entitled to special encouragement, there is nothing to prevent him from breaking up the item and giving to that department of the industry such further encouragement as he thinks proper. It is unnecessary to repeat the arguments which have already been advanced, but I would point out to the Minister that when he introduced the Tariff, some twelve months ago, he was satisfied that the brassware industry and other like enterprises were entitled to the percentages of protection set out in the schedule. The very object that he had in fixing these schedule rates was to give them the encouragement they required. If the value of those duties has since been substantially reduced, then we who are enacting this Tariff legislation at the present time must take cognisance of that depreciation. If, when the schedule was introduced last year, 35 per cent. was sufficient, a greater percentage must now be necessary.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.**—The same depreciation, or an even greater one, has been going on in other countries.

**Sir ROBERT BEST.**—So much the worse for us. A depreciation in values in countries exporting here decreases, very largely, our opportunities, because it makes them better able to pay the duties imposed.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.**—Then let the manufacturers here drop their prices. It is time that they did so.

**Sir ROBERT BEST.**—But, instead of wages in the brassware industry going down, they have actually increased 20 per cent. since this schedule was presented. That being so, the industry to-day is not getting 25 per cent. by way of protection. Whilst I admit the force of the Minister's argument as to the *omnium gatherum* character of this particular item, yet there is a means of compassing the difficulty; and if he cannot see his way now to give additional encouragement to the brassware industry, he may, after further investigation, entertain a proposal for an increased duty when the Tariff is before another place.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—An industry that wants more than the protection provided for in this case is not worth fostering.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The brassware industry in Australia is only in its infancy, but it is of very great value to the Commonwealth. Exhibits of its products have been made within the precincts of the House. Many thousands of pounds have been sunk in starting the industry, and we should not overlook the fact, since it has been demonstrated that it cannot carry on in face of the competition from Japan and elsewhere. The Minister should further investigate the matter, and, if necessary, break up the item so as to afford the increased protection sought.

Question.—That the words proposed to be added (Mr. FRANCIS') be so added—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	15
Noes	26
Majority	11

#### AYES.

Anstey, F.	Makin, N. J. O.
Best, Sir Robert	Maloney, Dr.
Blundell, R. P.	Mathews, J.
Charlton, M.	Moloney, Parker
Cunningham, L. L.	Riley, E.
Fenton, J. E.	Tellers:
Hay, A.	Francis, F. H.
Jowett, E.	Watkins, D.

#### NOES.

Bayley, J. G.	Lazzarini, H. P.
Bell, G. J.	Lister, J. H.
Bowden, E. K.	Mackay, G. H.
Cameron, D. C.	Rodgers, A. S.
Cook, Robert	Ryrie, Sir Granville
Corser, E. B. C.	Smith, Laird
Fleming, W. M.	Stewart, P. G.
Foley, G.	Watt, W. A.
Foster, Richard	Wienholt, A.
Gabb, J. M.	Wise, G. H.
Gibson, W. G.	Tellers:
Greene, W. M.	Burchell, R. J.
Gregory, H.	Story, W. H.
Groom, L. E.	

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Items 209 (Malleable iron castings n.e.i.) and 210 (Metal pins), agreed to.

Item 211—

Printers' type, including clumps, leads, spaces, and quads; lino. and other slugs; metal furniture and quotations, ad val., British, 22½ per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [3.42].—We have taken clumps and leads out of item 212, in which they appeared in the old Tariff, and included them in this item. I propose to return them to item 212, under which they will be free of duty if of British origin, and subject to *ad valorem* duties of 5 per cent. (intermediate) and 10 per cent. (general), for the following reason:—It was represented to us that the manufacturers were prepared to make clumps and leads in Australia. For that reason we included them in this item, thus making them dutiable. They now tell us that they cannot manufacture those articles here unless we grant them an increased duty, and this we do not propose to do.

Mr. FENTON.—I am surprised to hear that. They are the most easily manufactured things in printers' materials.

Mr. GREENE.—Exactly. When these people undertook to manufacture them if we included them in the dutiable list, we did so include them; but now they tell us that they will not manufacture them unless we impose an additional duty. I kept my undertaking with them so far as I could; but they have not lived up to it, and I do not propose to proceed further.

Mr. FENTON.—Is this the duty with which they were satisfied at the time?

Mr. GREENE.—This is what they asked for; but now they say they want another 10 per cent. I am not going to agree to that; but, of course, the Committee can please itself.

Mr. FENTON.—The Minister smiles when he says that, because he knows he is the Czar in this matter.

Mr. GREENE.—I have to submit to the will of the Committee, just as other honorable members have. This is one of those cases in which I do not feel justified in doing what is asked.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—If you cannot do it, it is a very bad case.

Mr. GREENE.—I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—

Printers' type, including spaces and quads; lino. and other slugs; metal furniture and quotations, ad val., British, 22½ per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent."

Mr. WATKINS (Newcastle) [3.45].—The honorable member for Adelaide



(Mr. Blundell), who is at present engaged on a deputation, asked me to refer to this item. According to my information, "The manufacture of clumps and leads is a different and distinct industry from type founding or casting of type, and in the United Kingdom no type-founder makes his own clumps or leads." I hear also that the whole of the type-making industry is in the hands of a tremendous American Trust, which is not only dealing with the type-makers of England by getting them into their fold, but is also beginning to deal with the Australian industry. If that is so, the request of the Australian manufacturers for an increase in the general rate, where it does not strike at anything British, is very modest. During the debates on this schedule those who desire to create Australian industries have said that they would rather have trusts here than outside, because they could deal with them here; but in this case, if the facts submitted are correct, an Australian industry is in imminent danger of being crushed by a Trust over which we have no control.

Mr. JOWETT.—The whole point is that you trust no Trust?

Mr. WATKINS.—That is so. After the Minister's amendment is dealt with, it would be a fair concession for him to agree to an increase of 10 per cent. in the general rate on articles manufactured in Australia.

Mr. GREENE.—I am not moving for an increase. It must be remembered that these are the raw material of the printer.

Mr. WATKINS. — Do I understand that clumps are the raw material for the linotype and other machines?

Mr. GREENE.—They are printers' raw material. I do not think clumps and leads are used in the linotype.

Mr. WATKINS.—Perhaps we can go into the question more fully after the amendment is dealt with.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [3:49].—The statement made by the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) places the whole question in quite a new light. The Americans are doing their best to make their trade in many lines as world-wide as possible. It would be

remarkable to me if we could not manufacture these articles in a big lead-producing country like this. We produce the lead and antimony in Australia, and it seems strange that we cannot supply the demand for the commoner articles used in the printing trade. A clump is merely a piece of lead made to various sizes, while a lead may be described as a thin strap of lead not quite type high, which is usually placed between the lines of type, although the linotype machine puts what is known as a "beard" upon each line, thus dispensing with the need for this separate piece of lead between the lines. Honorable members may have noticed that the leading article of a newspaper is usually printed in larger type, with more space between the lines, due to the insertion of the lead referred to. All circular printing, book printing, and work of that nature is treated in much the same way. Metal furniture should also be easy to manufacture, because all that is required is a mould into which the lead is poured, and afterwards cut off into the lengths required. The operation is so simple that it is evident the manufacturers here have not entered into the business more extensively because of the danger to be apprehended from American competition. This, I think, must be the reason for the request for a further protection. I can understand the Minister's disappointment at this request, because I presume that eighteen months ago—just prior to the introduction of the Tariff—the manufacturers suggested what they thought would be a fair duty, and evidently they came to the conclusion that 22½ per cent., 30 per cent., and 35 per cent. would be sufficient protection against the American Combine. But conditions have so altered since then that this protection has in some measure been wiped out. I am anxious that the raw material for these articles should be turned into the finished product in Australia, because our printing houses use thousands of tons of lead material in the shape of clumps, furniture, leads, and quads every year. We obtain a good deal of our requirements from Great Britain; but it seems strange that we should have to send the raw material 12,000 miles by sea to England, and bring the finished product back to Australia.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—I thought that was the natural protection we had been talking about.

Mr. FENTON.—The bottom has been knocked out of that argument long ago, as the honorable member for Moreton must know. I am very disappointed to think that the items referred to are on the free list so far as Great Britain is concerned, and 10 per cent. in the general Tariff, because 10 per cent. against the American Combine is worthless.

Mr. GREENE.—My amendment puts clumps and leads, not printers' type, in item 212.

Mr. FENTON.—Why make any difference between the clumps and quads? A quad is more difficult to make than a clump. If our manufacturers can turn out quads under the present Tariff I cannot understand why they cannot make clumps.

Mr. GREENE.—That they can is shown by the importations, which have fallen off by one-third.

Mr. FENTON.—And they tell you they cannot make clumps and leads?

Mr. GREENE.—That is what they say.

Mr. FENTON.—What about spaces?

Mr. GREENE.—They are all right.

Mr. FENTON.—But a space is a very thin piece of lead not type high, used in composition between the words. If spaces can be manufactured here, it is strange that clumps cannot also be made.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BLUNDELL (Adelaide) [3.58].—It is my intention to move to amend the item by increasing the British duty to 35 per cent. Those engaged in this industry in Australia have had a big struggle against a great deal of opposition, particularly from the American manufacturers, who are employing their well-known methods to destroy the local industry in order that they may have a clear run of the market. The Australian manufacturers are selling their type at prices considerably less than those at which we have been able to purchase outside. I can speak from experience, because I have been associated with the co-operative movement in my own State, and I know that we have been able to get almost everything we required at reasonable prices. There is a gentleman in Australia acting as foreign and Inter-State correspondent for one concern

that has not the welfare of the Australian industry at heart. This organization has issued a circular in which it invites the trade to endeavour to secure a considerable reduction in the existing duties on this item. This shows that even in Australia itself there are those who are endeavouring, in connexion with this particular industry, to bring about a reduction of the duties by which it is protected. After setting out the need for a reduction of duties, and dealing with the question of the serious injury to the import trade which the local industry represents, the circular to which I refer reads—

Should the foregoing meet with your views, it is suggested that you might see fit to place the matter before the member for your Division in the House of Representatives and the senators representing your State, asking that the old duty be re-established without preference, which, after all, only serves to hamper the importation of the best and not the worst classes of new type designs. Apart from any communication you may make to your political representatives, I should esteem it a favour if you would give me your views on this matter at your early convenience, for the confidential information of my principals.

That circular is signed by T. D. Chataway, who, I understand, at one time occupied the position of a member of the Senate. That is the kind of opposition which the local industry has to meet. I have said that prices in Australia are less than the prices of English and American imports at the present moment; but a circular has been issued by a representative of one of the American firms in Australia in which the statement is made that they are prepared to sell type at a 50 per cent. reduction on present prices. The firm carrying on the industry in Australia pays all the wages they are called upon to pay; and I may inform the Committee that 55 per cent. of the selling cost of type is paid in wages which are spent in Australia. In spite of this, the local industry is called upon to enter into competition with American firms that are prepared to agree to a reduction of 50 per cent. on present selling prices in this country. I mention, further, that everything used in the production of type locally is of Australian manufacture. Here, again, the local industry is placed at a very great disadvantage in connexion with the cost of the material it must use. In the



*Argus* of the 10th instant, I find that lead is quoted in Melbourne at £30 per ton, and tin at £224 per ton. In England, the price of lead is given at £22 17s. 6d. per ton, and the price of tin at £167 12s. 6d. Honorable members will see the great advantage which these lower prices for material give to the makers of type overseas. I ask the Minister to agree to an increase in these duties, and to retain in the item the two articles which he proposes to take out of it. It is true that representatives of the local firm approached the honorable gentleman some time ago, with a view to extending their operations, and becoming in a position practically to supply the whole of the requirements of the trade in Australia. On their representations, the Minister agreed to include in the item one or two articles which he now proposes to strike out of it, on the ground that the firm has not already started to manufacture these particular articles. The reason for this is obvious. It is of no use for the firm to undertake to put in the machinery essential for the manufacture of these particular articles when the industry they have already established is confronted with the disabilities to which I have referred. It is not reasonable to expect this firm to spend thousands of pounds upon the installation of the machinery essential to make these articles when they realize that their present industry is seriously attacked by outside competition. I have the authority of a representative of the firm for saying that, if these duties are made such as to protect the local industry against outside competition, they will be quite prepared to manufacture these particular articles that have been referred to, and to place themselves in a position to supply the whole of the requirements of the trade in Australia. I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, ad. val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 45 per cent."

I hope that the Minister will agree to this amendment. He should recognise that this industry deserves adequate protection, and that those engaged in it should be placed in a position to continue the business they have established, and which has proved so beneficial to the trade generally in Australia.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.8].—I hope the Committee will not accept the amendment. In this Tariff I have raised the general rate already by 10 per cent. Importations under this item have in 1919-20 fallen off from £12,024 in 1913 to £4,499. Ever since this Tariff was tabled the figures of importation have been included in this item clumps and leads, which were not included in it under the 1913 importation figures in the old Tariff. In the circumstances, it appears to me that the duties proposed are sufficient.

**Mr. FENTON**.—If any developments injurious to the industry take place, will the Minister promise to review this matter?

**Mr. GREENE**.—I promise to look into it.

Amendment negatived.

Item agreed to.

Amendment (br. **Mr. GREENE**) agreed to—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921.

Printers' type, including spaces and quads; lino and other slugs; metal furniture and quotations, ad val., British, 22½ per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent."

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 212 consequentially amended, and agreed to.

Item 213 (Refrigerating condensers, &c., item 214 (Retorts, &c.), item 215 (Saws), item 216 (Steel grit, &c.), item 217 (Sprinklers), item 218 (Tanks), and item 219 (Tools of trade), agreed to.

Item 220—

Traps, dog and rabbit, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

**Mr. WIENHOLT** (Moreton) [4.13].—It is a lucky thing for the Minister that a dingo is not able to bark, because proposals like this, coupled with the heavy duty on wire netting, might well elicit their approval, and also win for the Minister a medal from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I ask him the difference between a dog trap and a vermin trap. In my opinion, the dog is the most destructive of all vermin, and annually destroys stock worth millions of pounds. The proposal to tax dog traps is comparable in stupidity with that to put a tax on arsenic. The people

of Australia need the easiest and cheapest facilities for getting rid of pests. I move—

That the following words be added:—  
“And on and after 17th June, 1921, ad. val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.15].—I am prepared to meet the honorable member for Moreton (Mr. Wienholt) by taking dog traps out of this item, and making them taxable under item 221, as vermin traps; but rabbit traps are made in Australia in large numbers, and the industry should be protected. We thought that the manufacture of dog traps would have been undertaken. These traps are not made here.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—What is the difference between a dog trap and a rabbit trap?

**Mr. GREENE.**—A rabbit trap would not be strong enough to hold a dog very long.

**Mr. ROBERT COOK.**—What is the duty on mouse traps?

**Mr. GREENE.**—There is no duty on them, because I am not satisfied that the industry is on a sufficiently large scale to justify a duty.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER** (Wakefield) [4.18].—I shall support the amendment. The Minister's proposal is far from satisfactory. It is needless to repeat now what was said the other day, during the discussion on another item, concerning the loss to our primary producers caused by vermin. There are districts which would have to be given up entirely were not huge sums expended on fencing out and on trapping vermin, this expenditure being often greater than the rental paid. The Minister has promised to make dog traps dutiable as vermin traps at 5 per cent. and 10 per cent., if imported from any other country than great Britain; but he insists that rabbit traps shall be dutiable at 20, 30, and 40 per cent. I would remind him, however, that, generally speaking, it is the big man who suffers from the depredations of dogs, and that the tax on rabbit traps will fall more particularly on the small holders. It is absurd to say that the manufacturers of these traps need the protection of a duty of 40 per cent. Every member who knows anything of country conditions will oppose

this hampering of the man out-back. Many such men are holding country on which they barely make a living, because they lose in one year what they have gained in the preceding year.

**Mr. GIBSON** (Corangamite) [4.20].—I shall support the amendment. To-day the rabbit is just as great a pest in the southern States as is the dog in Queensland and New South Wales.

**Mr. CHARLTON.**—What is the price of rabbit traps?

**Mr. GIBSON.**—They were 12s. per dozen pre-war.

**Mr. STEWART.**—And they are now 33s. per dozen.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—The same honorable members who passed item 219, tools of trade for the use of artisans and mechanics, at duties ranging from nil to 10 per cent., are now supporting duties of 20 to 40 per cent. on the tools of trade employed by rabbit trappers. I object to this differentiation. The worker in the country should be treated in the same way as the worker in the city. The Committee has already imposed a duty on wire-netting, although it and dog traps and rabbit traps are essential to the man out-back. I hope honorable members will realize the injustice that is being done to the man on the land by imposing these high duties of 20 per cent., 30 per cent., and 40 per cent. on dog and rabbit traps. I ask the Minister to consider the advisability of bringing these articles under item 221, so that they may be admitted free from Great Britain, with a general Tariff of only 10 per cent.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [4.22].—I am pleased that the Minister has agreed to reduce the duty on dog traps, but the proposed high impost on rabbit traps is very serious.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—They are being made by the thousand in Australia.

**Mr. FOLEY.**—I grant that. But whereas the pre-war price was from 12s. to 15s. per dozen, the price to-day is 35s. 6d. per dozen.

**Mr. WATKINS.**—What was the pre-war price of wheat? Comparisons are odious.

**Mr. FOLEY.**—Nobody will convince me that duties of from 20 to 40 per cent. on rabbit traps are needed at the present time. Honorable members say that the prices of traps are falling, but I doubt if



they have ever been higher than they are to-day. I should like the Minister to explain what has actuated him in imposing such a high duty. Is the cost of production more than twice what it was before the war? This is not merely a question of giving assistance to the big pastoralists; hundreds of men are earning their living by trapping rabbits, and the more they can trap the better for the community.

**Mr. WATKINS** (Newcastle) [4.25].—On this item, as on nearly every other that has been discussed, honorable members who are opposed to the proposed duty have compared present prices with pre-war prices. The comparison is not fair, because to-day the whole world is upset, and conditions are different from those existing in pre-war days. The price of this article during the war was higher than the price to-day.

**Mr. FOLEY**.—Is the honorable member sure of that?

**Mr. WATKINS**.—I am basing my statement on the figures in the possession of the Minister. The making of rabbit traps is a new industry, and I have seen traps being turned out by the score.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—So they should be, even without the duty.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—And I suppose the farmers' wheat should have been handled during the war without Government assistance?

**Mr. STEWART**.—If that had been done, very little wheat would have been grown, and there would have been a large influx of population from the country to the cities.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—I supported the proposal that the Government should go to the assistance of the primary producers during the war, and I will always be ready to help them in times of stress; but I ask the farmers to realize that conditions are not normal to-day, and that the Australian-made trap will catch a rabbit as well as will an imported one. The trouble is that the farmers will not be fair in return for the fairness they received from other sections of the community during the war. The manufacture of rabbit traps will mean the employment of some people, and the more we employ the more there will be to consume the wheat and wear the wool produced by the man on the land.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—Is it worth the 40 per cent. duty to get a locally-made rabbit trap?

**Mr. WATKINS**.—The duty necessary to protect an industry from foreign competition is always worth while. The sheep-grower regards the rabbit as a curse, but the hat-maker considers it a blessing, because it supplies him with the fur for his industry, whilst those who conduct refrigerating plants and export meat also are grateful for the rabbit, and some people are wondering whether it or the sheep is the greater asset to Australia. I agree that up to a point the rabbit is a pest to the sheep-growers, but in the country I have been glad to share with a farmer a rabbit caught for his own food.

**Mr. JOWETT**.—The honorable member could not have eaten the rabbit if there had not been a trap with which to catch it.

**Mr. WATKINS**.—It might have been shot. I prefer rabbits trapped rather than poisoned, but trapped by an article made in Australia. I shall support the Minister.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [4.30].—In framing this Tariff the Government should have been prepared to admit free of duty anything that would assist the country in destroying a pest. The Government established a Department of Health, and are carrying out special investigations in the north for the purpose of abating some of the plagues to which the country is heir, and all this is being done at the public expense. Again, the State Governments are spending enormous sums of money to combat the rabbit pest. Western Australia built a rabbit-proof fence over 1,000 miles in length to stay the invasion of rabbits from the east, and when that failed built other fences for the same purpose. Every honorable member is aware of the grave injury done by these rodents, and the placing of a heavy duty on an article that helps to keep them in subjection is absurd. I sincerely hope that the Committee will insist that rabbit traps be admitted free of duty, and I shall make the same request when we are dealing with sheep dip and insecticides for use in orchards. Those things are of immense

value to the country. I cannot understand the Minister, who is a country representative, placing a duty of 40 per cent. upon rabbit traps.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [4.34].—It is because I am a country representative that I stand by the duty in the schedule. After the experience of this country during the war, I cannot understand honorable members who represent rural constituencies opposing this measure of protection.

Mr. GREGORY.—We have had the war dished up *ad nauseam*.

Mr. GREENE.—Surely we should learn something from the lessons taught by the war. While it was on we could not get traps, and rabbits were overrunning the country. Then three or four firms started to manufacture traps in the Commonwealth. But honorable members in the Corner now say that they do not care how those men came to the relief of the farmer; their money must be thrown into the gutter, and their industry must be left to fight against foreign competition. Then when war happens again they will expect other firms to come to their rescue by producing locally the things they require. Is that a fair proposition? It is a short-sighted policy. It is to the interests of the primary producers that these industries should be established in the country.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—At the cost of a 40 per cent. duty?

Mr. GREENE. — I do not object to meeting honorable members to some extent in respect of the rate of duty, but over and over again the honorable member for Dampier and those associated with him have said that they did not care what the general duty was so long as preference was given to the British article.

Mr. GREGORY. — We were talking of different goods. I did not say that in regard to agricultural machinery.

Mr. GREENE.—I increased the general duty on these traps because during the war the whole of that business was lost by Great Britain. The importation figures show that the whole of the business has been taken by British competitors. I do not mind making the general rate 30 per cent. if honorable members wish it; but, in view of the fact that these people came to our rescue during the war,

and established works on a big scale, enabling them to turn out all the traps that Australia can use, the British rate should be, at least, 20 per cent.

Mr. FLEMING.—Australia could use a lot of dog traps.

Mr. GREENE.—I have cut out the dog traps altogether, because they are not made here, and these people propose to confine their operations to rabbit traps. It is not an unreasonable rate. The process of manufacture is comparatively simple, machinery being largely employed, but a fair quantity of labour is required in assembling. It passes my comprehension that members representing country interests, forgetting the bitter experience of the past, should be prepared to throw to the wolves those who came to their rescue in a period of stress and difficulty. An honorable member talks about cheapness. The first consideration in the question of developing any fiscal policy is security, cheapness coming in afterwards.

Mr. JOWETT.—We want security against rabbits.

Mr. GREENE.—Exactly; and to get that we should use rabbit traps made in Australia to catch Australian rabbits.

Mr. JOWETT (Grampians) [4.39].—This is one of the most important items in the schedule, and it ought to be very fully debated. I have many constituents who are making an honest endeavour to keep down the appalling rabbit pest.

Mr. WATKINS.—If it had not been for the local manufacturers they would not have been in a position to get traps during the war.

Mr. JOWETT.—There is no reason why they should not have got all the traps they required. The making of a rabbit trap is not a difficult matter, and there is no justification for the imposition of this heavy duty. The Minister (Mr. Greene) has treated the Committee with the greatest possible courtesy, and has extended the utmost consideration to the views of others and appreciation of their arguments. Therefore I appeal to him to be merciful, and to consider the sufferings of the very large numbers of people engaged in farming and grazing pursuits in Australia—numbers which, I regret to say, are steadily diminishing because of the heavy burdens being placed on this



section of the community, and because of the lack of adequate consideration shown to their needs. During the last few minutes I have heard views expressed by honorable members opposite which indicate that they are not fully seized with the serious nature of the devastation caused by rabbits. The inference has been made that the existence of large numbers of rabbits is beneficial because they supply food and skins. I admit that when rabbits are trapped or shot their carcasses may be used for food and their skin for fur, or for the raw material used in hat making. This to some extent is a mitigation of what is otherwise a terrible affliction upon the Commonwealth. But this fact provides the strongest possible argument in favour of the removal of a duty which may result in making it unpayable to trap rabbits. We cannot exterminate the rabbits, but there is an enormous advantage in trapping them, and thus securing the carcasses and the skins, as against adopting the purely destructive policy of poisoning them.

Mr. WATKINS.—Is not closer settlement the best means of preventing the spread of rabbits?

Mr. JOWETT.—Closer settlement, of which members of the Country party are the strongest advocates, is a most excellent preventive against the spread of rabbits, or any other pest; but the rabbit question has a most important bearing upon closer settlement, especially upon the settlement of soldiers on country lands. On one large estate I visited a few years ago in search of grass for sheep during a drought period I saw enormous numbers of rabbits. There was a sufficient amount of grass, but I remarked to my manager, when I decided to put my sheep there, that I felt confident we could not keep them there for more than three or four months. The rabbits on the property were very numerous, because at that time it did not pay to trap them exhaustively. This estate was subsequently bought for the settlement of soldiers. It was exceedingly valuable land, with a good rainfall, and the prospects were favorable, save in one respect, the prevalence of rabbits. Last week I inquired as to the progress made by the soldiers who had bought the land, paying a price which would

not have been unreasonable if there had been no rabbits. I was informed that they were not doing too well, and when I asked if they had got rid of the rabbits, the reply was, "No; they are the trouble." In regard to the duty upon rabbit traps, I ask the Minister to make some concession upon the British rate of duty. I know that he is prepared to make some concession in regard to the general rate, but the proposed duty of 20 per cent. on British-made traps is too high. The discussion on this item has made it apparent that the imposition of heavy duties on rabbit traps is a very serious matter to all engaged in the farming and grazing industry. Will the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) reconsider his decision, and amend the rates to 10 per cent. British, 20 per cent. intermediate, and 30 per cent. general?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—That is very fair.

Mr. JOWETT.—I think it is, and I trust the Minister will accept my suggestion.

Mr. GREENE.—I will do what I have said.

Mr. JOWETT.—Do I understand that the Minister is agreeable to a 10 per cent. duty on British goods?

Mr. GREENE.—No.

Mr. FENTON.—Why not give the Australian manufacturer an opportunity?

Mr. JOWETT.—I am prepared to give the Australian manufacturer every possible opportunity to conduct his business on a successful basis; but I would be neglecting my duty if I did not endeavour to also protect the interests of those hard-working men on the land who are toiling day and night endeavouring to combat this pest.

Mr. WATKINS.—The honorable member should assist the firm that was of benefit to those on the land during a very trying period.

Mr. JOWETT.—I have nothing to say against the firm—I do not even know its name—indeed I am anxious to assist them. But I am also anxious to assist those people on the land whose properties have been devastated by the ravages of rabbits. In my own electorate, and in those represented by other members of this party, there are thousands of settlers who are fighting day and night to protect

their properties against rabbits and other pests. In some instances the burden has been so great that settlers have been driven off the land, and they are already increasing the numbers of people in our over-populated cities. Will the Minister agree to my suggestion?

Mr. GREENE.—I have already said that I will agree to the rates being 20 per cent., 25 per cent., and 30 per cent.

Mr. WATKINS.—You have received a concession, and are not satisfied.

Mr. JOWETT.—There has been no concession or reduction in the British rate. The bulk of the rabbits trapped can be used commercially, and we should encourage the trapping industry rather than allow the rabbits to be poisoned, because the carcasses are then of no use to any one. Even if it means remaining here late, I shall not neglect my duty by allowing this item to pass without raising a strong protest against such high duties. I again appeal to the Minister to reconsider his decision in view of the cogent arguments which have been adduced.

Mr. GABB.—I call attention to the state of the Committee. [*Quorum formed.*]

Mr. JOWETT.—Is the Minister prepared to agree to a British rate of 15 per cent.?

Mr. GREENE.—No.

Mr. JOWETT.—A large number of people in the country producing food-stuffs are not even paying expenses, and it is the duty of the Government to protect their interests. The cost of erecting wire netting fences on small areas of from, say, 200 to 800 acres, is more per acre than on larger areas. I would now point out that any extra cost of rabbit traps, or of rabbit trapping, must fall much more heavily upon small land-owners than upon the owners of large estates. The owner of, say, 10,000 acres in one solid block will have comparatively little difficulty in protecting his property from rabbits by erecting a wire-netting fence all round it. But the smaller the area the greater the cost per acre incurred in wire netting. Consequently, a large number of settlers on small holdings cannot afford to protect their properties by completely enclosing them with rabbit-proof netting, because it adds to the cost per acre of the land. Therefore,

they have almost entirely to rely upon trapping. I have already detained the Committee longer than I intended, and I now make a final appeal to the Minister to amend the rates in the direction I have suggested.

Mr. ANSTEY (Bourke) [5.5].—It is difficult to know, in following the arguments of the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), whether he is speaking as representative of the disappearing constituency of Grampians or as a prospective candidate for some metropolitan seat. I do not care, personally, whether the matter at issue is rabbit traps or not. With me, the question is, "Is this article, necessary as it is for use in Australia, to be made in this country or not?" Does the honorable member for Grampians desire the importation of rabbit traps from overseas?

Mr. BELL.—We want them cheap. We do not care where they come from.

Mr. JOWETT.—I do not take that view.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Then there is a disagreement on the part of honorable members opposite. One wants rabbit traps cheap, and does not care who makes them.

Mr. JOWETT.—I consider they could be made easily in Australia, and that they would be of a quality which would defy competition; and, moreover, that Australian makers could cater for the demand with the help of a 10 per cent. duty.

Mr. ANSTEY.—Of course, these simple things ought to be turned out in Australia as easily as anywhere else, and there is no reason why they should not be made here to cater completely for Australian requirements. But, if honorable members desire rabbit traps to be made in Australia, let them agree to a duty which will permit these things to be turned out here, and overthrow foreign competition. If an honorable member were to say that there should be no duty at all, I could appreciate his view-point; but, when he advocates a duty as low as 10 per cent., it is obvious that he does not favour a Protective Tariff, but wants a revenue Tariff. He wants to impose so low a duty that it will not protect the Australian manufacturer, but will encourage the importation of foreign products—which, however, will be required to pay a heavy revenue tax. Why should any one take up such an absurd position?



Mr. JOWETT.—I would rather have them come in free.

Mr. ANSTEY.—There is no article capable of being made in this country which can be adequately protected with a 10 per cent. duty. If honorable members desire Protection, the rates of duty must be high enough to really and adequately protect, at the same time having regard, however, to the price which the people must pay for the goods. I consider that the Minister has gone far enough, and I hope he will not, either now or upon any occasion, agree to less than a rate of 20 per cent. For a duty less than that is not protective, but is merely revenue productive.

Mr. FLEMING (Robertson) [5.8].—The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Anstey) has apparently missed a most important point. It is involved in the consideration of what is the least expensive method of destroying rabbits. Poisoning and the trap are the means most commonly employed. But poisoning is the most wasteful. It not only destroys the rabbit as an asset after its destruction, but it is destructive to the natural life of the bush generally. The use of the poison cart has cost Australia hundreds of thousands of pounds, if not millions.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It has saved Australia that much.

Mr. FLEMING.—I know that quite a lot of people consider the poison cart the best and most effective means of coping with the pest.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is certainly the easiest.

Mr. FLEMING.—There lies the whole trouble.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—In fact, it is the only really effective way.

Mr. FLEMING.—Sometimes poisoning is the most effective way; but if effectiveness is the sole objective, the best method of all is to poison the water. That settles the rabbit, but everything else also, at the same time. The poison cart has been the means of almost exterminating bird life in parts of Australia. It has had the effect of tremendously increasing the blowfly pest, and it has added to our troubles with grasshoppers. There are many factors which operate in upsetting the balance of nature; but nothing has been so ruthless in that direc-

tion as the poison cart. By its use not only is the carcass of the rabbit itself wasted, but the balance of nature becomes seriously disturbed, if not locally overthrown; and that balance is the only certain safeguard of the man on the land. The trap may not be as destructive as poison; but it does not destroy the natural enemies of the rabbit and the various other pests which burden the producer. The rabbit trap is the small man's weapon. Netting, which is becoming ever more expensive, is the means adopted by the large holder for ridding his land of rabbits. Not only is the trap the main asset of the small holder in keeping down the pest, but it is the means adopted by thousands of children throughout Australia of bringing in a little pocket-money while assisting to rid their neighbourhood of rabbits; and it is similarly the means of providing employment for large numbers of men in the off seasons. The poison cart takes away the opportunity for young people to make a little money, and for the working man in the country to make a living during the dull periods. If the Minister insists upon the rates set forth in the schedule he will be conferring undue advantage upon the poison cart. It is highly necessary that we should, as far as possible, restore the balance of nature. An old resident of New South Wales, who has been writing to the papers for many years upon this subject, has established a sanctuary on his own extensive property in an effort to restore the depleted bird life and native fauna. He will not permit a poison cart anywhere near his run, yet, I am told, he is the least troubled by rabbits among all the land-owners in his district. If all holders were to follow the advice and example of Mr. Abbott, they would not be troubled with the vermin and other pests which so handicap the man on the land to-day. There is a prominent resident of Melbourne who has also long given consideration to the subject of the restoration of the balance of nature. He has practically spent his life in working out problems having to do with the extermination of rabbits and the like, and he is bitterly opposed to the poison cart. In the matter under discussion there is not only involved the question of the rates of duty to be fixed upon rabbit traps, but there is this additional consideration:

That any difference made in the cost of applying the two methods of destruction will go a long way towards further increasing the disabilities from which Australia is now suffering. If the Minister intends to accept or move an amendment, I hope it will be in the direction of according greater preference to Britain. In the course of the Tariff debate I have already urged more generous measures of preference towards the United Kingdom, and I have suggested that, if necessary, the duties in respect of foreign products should be increased. With its wide variety of climatic conditions, the Empire is capable of becoming self-supporting. Australia is not, and never can be, self-supporting. No single country, indeed, which sets out in that direction can become anything but a failure.

**Mr. BELL** (Darwin) [5.17].—Last week, when debating the duties upon wire netting, I spoke of the devastation caused by rabbits in the north-west of Tasmania and parts of Victoria. I do not propose to repeat those remarks, but I earnestly ask the Minister to accede to a reduction in the rates of duty upon rabbit traps. Of what importance is an industry—if it can be so called—engaged in the manufacture of rabbit traps compared with the welfare of agriculture and grazing throughout Australia? I fear that the Minister and many honorable members do not realize the menace of the rabbit pest. Had their experience been such as mine, they would perceive how really trivial is the question whether or not rabbit traps can be or should be profitably made in Australia. The cry of honorable members is, "Give Australian industry a chance." I say, "Give Australian pioneers a chance, and do not talk about the manufacturer every time you speak of Australia." I said, by interjection just now, that I did not care where rabbit traps came from so long as we got them cheap. I repeat that with all seriousness. What does it matter who makes the weapon with which we fight and try to overcome the menacing rabbit pest? I do not care whether the rabbit trap which I use to save my holding is made in Japan, or in Germany, or in some other world, in fact. It is our chief weapon of offence against Aus-

tralia's worst scourge. In many parts, the man on the land is faced with ruin. We must use the trap, and the poison cart, and wire netting, too. We have already put on wire netting a very high duty, which was not justified in any sense. I am now offering my little plea against a further increase on the other weapon which we must use for the destruction of rabbits. I ask the Minister to give favorable consideration to our request. I have supported him on every occasion when those on the Opposition benches have asked him for an increase, and I do expect him to give some consideration to the people for whom I am speaking.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [5.21].—I am sorry that I cannot see my way clear to agree to my honorable friend's request. I have heard a number of debates which had some amusing and some annoying features, but to-day I have heard statements about which I can say that I really do not know whether they annoy or amuse me most. Any honorable member who has had experience of what happens under practical trapping conditions knows full well the net result on the number of rabbits in this country.

**Mr. BELL**.—I can prove to the Minister that last year 16,000 rabbits were trapped on one sheep run, of less acreage than that number, at any rate.

**Mr. GREENE**.—It cannot be said that 16,000 acres off which 16,000 rabbits are trapped in a year is infested country.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—We have trapped less than that in a week in a place half that size.

**Mr. GREENE**.—Yes, in heavily infested country far more would be trapped. Everybody knows that in most instances the rabbit trapper's idea is not to get rid of the rabbits entirely, but to keep them going.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—Do you want to make it a permanent industry?

**Mr. GREENE**.—No; but trapping by itself is not much good as a means of getting rid of the pest. We have had experience in Australia regarding the industry of manufacturing rabbit traps. The effect of making this duty 10 per cent. would simply be to turn it into a revenue duty, and the industry would go out of existence.



Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Why should it be simply a revenue duty? The trap is the simplest thing in the world to make.

Mr. GREENE.—I will give the Committee an instance of what happened under the old 10 per cent. Tariff. I have received a letter from a man who is now manufacturing rabbit traps, in which he says—

Without a duty local manufacture is impossible except for just a month or two as at present, while there is a dearth of imported traps. My reason for making this assertion is based on the experience of a few years ago. At that time a local factory was established, but the venture was disastrous, because makers abroad dumped traps into Australia at a price which made it quite impossible for the Australian firm to compete, and when it had been defeated, prices were, of course, raised.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—They were not raised much before the war.

Mr. GREENE.—I feel that, with the experience we have had, we cannot agree to reduce this duty if we have any real desire to see Australia put in a position to protect itself in all circumstances. I cannot believe that a duty of 20 per cent. can result in any increase in the price of rabbit traps, with several makers manufacturing in this country. The duty is moderate. I am prepared to take out dog traps, and to make the foreign duty 30 per cent.

Mr. JOWETT.—No; we do not ask for that.

Mr. GREENE.—Some have asked for it. In making that offer I am meeting the Committee in a reasonable way, and at the same time keeping faith with the manufacturers who came to our rescue at a time when we were practically helpless.

Mr. JOWETT.—The duty of 10 per cent., which operated some years ago, did not apply to British traps?

Mr. GREENE.—No.

Mr. JOWETT.—And there has never been a duty on British traps?

Mr. GREENE.—No.

Mr. JOWETT.—Then, in the circumstances, a duty of 10 per cent. would be reasonable.

Mr. ROBERT COOK (Indi) [5.27].—The Minister's reply to the common-sense arguments that have been used has been simply a repetition of the answers he has given all through the piece to reasonable demands made by reasonable members. We have given him a very fair go so far

as the Tariff is concerned. Everywhere outside one can hear it said that the people are going protection mad. I am a Protectionist, but many of the items to which the Committee have agreed represent, not protection at all, but extreme prohibition. An instance of that is the duty of 45 per cent. on a reaper and binder, which is one of the most useful necessities that a man can have on a farm; and another instance is the duty of 68s. British, 84s. intermediate, and 105s. general, per ton on wire-netting.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Atkinson).—Order! I must ask the honorable member to direct his remarks to the item before the Committee.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—The items to which I refer are closely connected with this item, which puts an almost prohibitive duty on imported traps. Rabbit traps were manufactured here for years in the past, and sold for a paltry 8s. 6d. per dozen, and even then the makers made money. They are the implements of trade for hundreds of people, who have made a very fine living at trapping. In 1917-18, the exports of rabbits, taking eight rabbits to the sheep, were equal to 3,288,579 sheep. That shows what a good industry it is to the trapper. We must also remember the losses suffered by the man on the land through the destruction caused by rabbits. Hundreds of people throughout the Commonwealth who are now idle could be well employed in trapping rabbits. Trappers have made up to £6, £8, and £10 per week. A good trapper can manage about 100 traps. The lifetime of a trap is only about one season, taking into account losses and other causes. Of the two industries, the manufacture of traps, which the Minister is so anxious to foster, and the destruction of the rabbit pest, the latter is far greater, and of much greater importance, and employs many more hands. If we handicap the man on the land in the way proposed, the population of our capital cities will increase in a still greater ratio than it has done in the past. The penalizing effects of the imposts which we are placing on wire netting and rabbit traps will make it practically impossible for any person to live in the outlying parts adjacent to rabbit-infested country. We have heard

with great regret how the rabbits have taken possession of Gippsland. They came in there only comparatively recently, and honorable members can picture the lot of the Gippsland farmer, who is penalized to the extent of £100 per mile to fence his property, and is now to be further penalized by the fact that the rabbitier will not be able to purchase traps in consequence of the price that they will be put up to. All through the piece the amusing argument has been put forward that these excessive duties are going to reduce prices. That has not been my experience in the past, nor do I think it has been the experience of many other members. I am convinced, speaking on behalf of the man on the land in particular, that by imposing penalizing duties of the kind now before us, we shall do the country tenfold more harm than good.

**Mr. RILEY** (South Sydney) [5.33].—There is a principle underlying this item. The manufacture of traps is an industry.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—Do you want to make the manufacture of rabbit traps a permanent industry in Australia?

**Mr. RILEY.**—We want traps to eradicate the pest. An effort was made to start the industry thirty years ago, but the market was flooded, and the firm which had begun to make Australian traps was completely wiped out, so that up to the time of the war all the traps used here were imported. When the war began we had to fall back on our own resources, with the result that a factory has been established, machinery has been installed, and men have been trained to make these very important articles. The factories buy their steel and wire from Australian makers. Surely we are not going to take the advice of the honorable member for Darwin (Mr. Bell), and say that we do not care where the traps come from so long as we can get them cheap? Such a policy could be applied to every industry in the Commonwealth, and we should then have hundreds of thousands of men out of work. I do not say that the Corner party believe in that sort of thing. No matter whether an industry is large or small, we must consider the principle of establishing it in our midst. If this industry is killed we have no guarantee as a Parliament that

the price of rabbit traps will not be increased simply because the local competition has been beaten. Our experience is that the importer will regulate the market to get the highest price possible for his article. The reduction of this duty would not mean cheap rabbit traps. If local competition were destroyed, farmers and others who use rabbit traps would be in the hands of the importers, who could enter into a Combine to regulate prices, and charge what they pleased. It is rather curious that honorable members of the Country party should be putting up a strenuous fight on this relatively unimportant item, seeing that far more important items were allowed by them to go through yesterday, notwithstanding that they were of great moment to the primary producers. I do not think that farmers and graziers will appreciate this display on the part of the Country party, who assert that pastoralists and others will be ruined if a duty of 20 per cent. be put on rabbit traps. That is all moonshine.

**Mr. FLEMING.**—We have a 10 per cent. increase made here and there on almost all items affecting the primary producer.

**Mr. RILEY.**—Surely the farmers will not go out of business because of a duty of 20 per cent. on rabbit traps.

**Mr. FLEMING.**—No; but instead of trapping rabbits, they will poison them.

**Mr. JOWETT.**—This duty will interfere with the food supplies of Sydney. It will mean that rabbits, instead of being trapped and sent down to the Sydney market, will be poisoned.

**Mr. RILEY.**—We are considering now not a question of food supplies, but the manufacture of rabbit traps in Australia.

**Mr. FLEMING.**—Quite so; but we have to consider what will be the result of this duty, and I repeat that it will lead to the farmers resorting to the cheaper method of poisoning, instead of trapping, rabbits.

**Mr. RILEY.**—I would prevent them resorting to that means of dealing with the pest. I can sympathize with the desire of the man on the land that the cost of agricultural machinery and implements should be kept as low as possible, but this is such a relatively small item that I fail to understand the attitude of my honorable friends of the Country party. We have to consider the position of the



manufacturer of rabbit traps in Australia and the men who have been trained in the industry established by him.

Mr. ROBERT COOK.—What about the returned soldiers who have gone on the land?

Mr. RILEY.—I hope we shall do something better for our returned men than merely finding employment for them as rabbit trappers.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [5.40].—I feel very strongly on this question, and am going to make an emphatic protest against the action of the Minister (Mr. Greene). The honorable member for South Sydney (Mr. Riley) has referred to the manufacture of rabbit traps here as an "industry," and has said that men have been educated in the manufacture of traps. I invite the honorable member to say what education is necessary in this regard seeing that all the parts of a rabbit trap are cut out by a machine. The process is as simple as shelling peas. The Minister also spoke of this as an "industry." I prefer to speak of it as a business. We do not want a permanent rabbit-trap making industry in Australia. What we want is to exterminate the vermin.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—Wherein lies the honorable member's consistency? He voted for a higher duty on agricultural implements, and yet puts up a fight against this duty on such a small item as rabbit traps.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I gave my support to a fairly high duty on implements and machinery that are technical in character, and are the product of many brains. Their manufacture also involves an enormous outlay, whereas one machine is capable of turning out all the rabbit traps required in Australia.

Mr. PARKER MOLONEY.—The principle, however, is the same.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—But the conditions are different. My honorable friend can make black appear as nearly white as possible when he is showing that he is the friend of the farmer and also the friend of the city dweller, who is not always acting in the best interests of the man on the land. The Minister gave away his whole position in regard to this item when he said that one factory for the manufacture of rabbit traps had been

established here, and that the proprietor of it had told him that it was impossible to make a success of it in the face of the present competition, because the business was exceedingly erratic. Undoubtedly it is erratic, because the vermin are at times more troublesome than at others; and there is no reason why we should endeavour to establish a permanent industry which is subject to such erratic conditions. There is no getting away from the fact that this increased duty will mean for all time an increased price for rabbit traps.

Mr. FENTON.—I do not think so.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The manufacturer who seeks this duty of 20 per cent. says that it is essential, because he cannot cope with the existing competition. I am proud to admit that the duties imposed to encourage a good many industries in Australia have ultimately led to reduced prices; but, according to the expert who asked the Minister to impose this duty it is impossible to establish a successful and continuous industry of rabbit trap making. If that is so, why impose this big duty? Some of my honorable friends opposite are familiar with the ravages of the dingo, the fox, and the rabbit. They know that in many parts of Australia the man on the land finds his work being destroyed night and day by these pests. They know that both the rabbit and the dingo drove everything before them in the western districts of New South Wales many years ago. Their ravages were worse than those of a drought. Hardly a head of stock was left in many districts. And yet we are asked to impose this duty to support what is a mere pretence at an industry. I will fight this item to the last ditch, and, if it is passed, I will do my best to bring about its rejection by another place. We ought to display some common sense; but it seems to me that this is about the worst example we have had of Protection run mad.

Mr. WIENHOLT (Moreton) [5.45].—Although one can well understand the attitude taken up by strong Protectionists, I want to make it plain that in this case a new principle is involved. Every one knows that Australia, a virgin country when first occupied by white men, has been particularly subject to a number of plagues. The worst of these is the prickly

pear, and then come the dingo, the rabbit, the fox, and other pests. I think that the most ardent Protectionist, without any sacrifice of principle, can heartily adopt the view that no obstacle should be thrown in the way of obtaining, in the cheapest and most effective form, the materials necessary for coping with these pests. We need traps for trapping rabbits and dingoes, arsenic to deal with the prickly pear, and chemical dips for dealing with the tick and other evils. All these should be obtainable in the speediest and cheapest way. We are all familiar with the historical advice that a man should not argue with "the master of fifty legions," and it may be well for us not to refuse the bargain which has been offered us by the Minister (Mr. Greene), who is, after all, the master of the situation, since he is in charge of the Tariff. The honorable gentleman has offered to remove dog traps from this item; and I should like to know whether, in the event of my pressing my amendment, and the Committee deciding against it, we shall lose that offer.

Mr. GREENE.—Certainly not. I will stand by what I have promised the Committee.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—The Minister has made a fair and courteous offer, but I shall not be able to withdraw my amendment, since to do so would be to break faith with those who have strongly supported it. I hope that, even at this the eleventh hour, the Minister will render it unnecessary for us to proceed to a division, by agreeing to a 10 per cent. reduction of the duty as against imports from Great Britain. If he will do that, he may make the general Tariff as high as he pleases.

Mr. JOWETT (Grampians) [5.50].—I have a little more information which I desire to place before the Committee. But, before doing so, I should like to hear the Minister again address himself to the amendment.

Mr. FENTON.—He has only just finished speaking.

Mr. JOWETT.—Cannot the Minister make some concession in regard to the proposed duty under the British preferential Tariff?

Mr. FENTON.—He has promised to put a lower duty upon dog traps.

Mr. JOWETT.—That would be the most preposterous absurdity of which one can conceive. However, I am discussing the duty which it is proposed to levy upon rabbit traps.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Atkinson).—The amendment of the honorable member for Moreton (Mr. Wienholt) covers the whole item.

Mr. JOWETT.—I have here some very important information relating to the ravages wrought by rabbits upon forests. But I do not desire to introduce fresh matter if there be any hope of inducing the Minister to make some concession in regard to the duty proposed under the British preferential Tariff.

Mr. GREENE.—I have told the honorable member what I am prepared to do.

Mr. JOWETT.—I am sorry that the honorable gentleman has clothed himself with an impenetrable armour, and that he is not open to conviction upon this matter. I am strongly in favour of having rabbit traps made in Australia, but I do not think that the imposition of a duty is necessary to secure that result. The honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Richard Foster) has shown that this is one of those simple industries which do not require the assistance of any duty whatever. If a duty of 20 per cent. be imposed upon rabbit traps, it will most certainly increase their price to our rabbit trappers.

Mr. ANSTEE.—What about the bite of the rabbit?

Mr. JOWETT.—The bite of the rabbit is one of the most injurious in Australia. This rodent bites the grass lower, and depreciates the pasture more, than does any other animal. It consumes the natural herbage which is required by our sheep and cattle, and tends to destroy the valuable grasses, and it thus inflicts incalculable injury upon our pastoralists. The rabbit is also one of the greatest enemies to our forests. In this connexion I propose to quote from *The Standard Cyclopedia of Modern Agriculture*, a work which has evidently been exhaustively studied by honorable members, because I notice that every page of it has been cut. Under the heading of "Rabbits—Damage to Woodlands," I find the following:—

In Britain rabbits are the most dangerous enemies to forestry. The time when rabbits are most likely to attack young trees is during frosty weather, and especially when the



ground is covered with snow. They prefer soft-barked kinds of trees; but as all kinds of trees have soft bark when young, none are safe where rabbits abound. In copsewoods the ash and hazel underwood suffers most, and in many parts of England once valuable coppices have been decimated where rabbits are preserved in the vicinity.

Mr. RILEY.—I beg to call attention to the state of the Committee. [*Quorum formed.*]

Mr. JOWETT.—The article which I was quoting continues—

During severe winters they also attack big old park and avenue trees, sometimes completely ringing the bark and killing the trees. Almost the only kinds of trees they do not attack are large, thick-barked oaks, although the Corsican pine, among conifers, is comparatively immune, and the common *Rhododendron ponticum* among shrubs. Smearing with ill-smelling substances cannot be relied upon to protect young plants against this pest.

Mr. RILEY.—I beg again to call attention to the state of the Committee. [*Quorum formed.*]

Mr. JOWETT.—I had intended to give the Committee some information of very great value; but, seeing that the Minister is evidently resolved that he will not be influenced by any argument, and that the majority of honorable members may be relied upon to support him in the attitude which he has taken up, it is idle for me to continue to debate the amendment.

Question.—That the words proposed to be added (Mr. WIENHOLT'S amendment) be so added—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes .. .. .	10
Noes ... .. .	27

Majority .. .. .	17
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Bell, G. J.  
Bowden, E. K.  
Cook, Robert  
Fleming, W. M.  
Foley, G.  
Foster, Richard

# AYES.

Gregory, H.  
Wienholt, A.

# Tellers:

Gibson, W. G.  
Jowett, E.

# NOES.

Anstey, F.  
Cameron, D. C.  
Charlton, M.  
Cook, Sir Joseph  
Corser, E. B. C.  
Cunningham, L. L.  
Fenton, J. E.  
Francis, F. H.  
Gabb, J. M.  
Greene, W. M.  
Groom, L. E.  
Hay, A.  
Lamond, Hector  
Lister, J. H.

Mackay, G. H.  
Maloney, Dr.  
Mathews, J.  
Moloney, Parker  
Riley, E.  
Rodgers, A. S.  
Ryrie, Sir Granville  
Smith, Laird  
Watkins, D.  
Watt, W. A.  
Wise, G. H.

# Tellers:

Burchell, R. J.  
Story, W. H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield)

[6.12].—I move—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, British, 10 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."

It seems to me incontrovertible that the duties I propose are quite adequate for the protection of local manufacturers of traps. The Minister told the Committee that he had received a request for higher rates from a gentleman who said that the demand for traps fluctuated greatly. That must be true, because there are times when vermin of all sorts increase rapidly, and other times when they abate. The statement seems to me to show that the business of trap making is not an industry worth protecting. It is not a manufacture that is complete in itself, and cannot properly be dignified by the name of "industry." One machine could pretty well provide all the traps that Australia needs. It is not creditable to the Minister and to his officers that they should have recommended a duty of 40 per cent.

Mr. GREENE.—But that is one of the rates in the honorable member's amendment.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We have to take what we can get, and what I am chiefly concerned about is getting a reduction of the duty on British imports to 10 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [6.15].—The honorable member for Wakefield has not given to this matter the consideration which he might have given to it if he thinks that one machine could make all the traps that Australia uses. I should think that a rabbit trap goes through twenty processes in the course of its manufacture.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Possibly; but it is a very simple contrivance, and the capital involved in any business for the making of these traps must be relatively small.

Mr. GREENE.—Probably between £20,000 and £30,000 would equip a factory. What the correspondent to whom the honorable member alluded said was that it was useless under the then existing conditions, there being no duty, to manufacture traps in Australia, because the

only chance of trade was when traps were not being imported and there was a shortage of them in the country.

Mr. GREGORY.—The Customs Department has no record of the importations of traps.

Mr. GREENE.—No; but we keep records of the revenue under each item of the Tariff from which we can estimate approximately the importations.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—In ordinary times, nearly every trap imported has come from the United Kingdom.

Mr. GREENE. — In 1918-19 the revenue collected on traps imported at the general rate of 10 per cent. was £1,500, which shows the value of the importations to have been about £15,000. In that year, not many rabbit traps could have come from the United Kingdom. In 1915-16 the revenue was £323. I have no pre-war figures immediately at hand. The reason for the 40 per cent. duty in the general column is, as I have already explained, that the trade was passing from the United Kingdom to other countries, and I wish to restore the balance; not that so high a rate is necessary for the protection of the local industry, which I think should be protected with a duty of 20 per cent. The value of traps used in Australia annually would not be much under £50,000, and their manufacture at the present time employs quite a number of people. Lane, a well and favorably known English maker, has recently established a factory here, and I think we should see that men who take a risk of this kind should be reasonably dealt with.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—How long has he been here?

Mr. GREENE.—The factory has been working for about six months. I am sorry that so much time should have been occupied in arguing this matter. I feel that the people of Australia are agreed that our war experience should not be repeated, and that we must be self-contained in the matter of providing means for dealing with this pest, so far as trapping can deal with it, although as a means of exterminating rabbits, I personally do not think that the rabbit trap will play any conspicuous part.

Mr. FLEMING (Robertson) [6.21].—I am sorry that I cannot allow the amendment to go to a vote without expressing

the view that honorable members are not yet seized of the real importance of this matter. I say that, because I have been accused of making a most exaggerated statement when I said that the duty is of real importance to Australia. It is important to this country as affecting the destruction of a pest which has cost Australia hundreds of millions in money, and the end of which no man can foresee. There are honorable members of the Committee who think that the rabbit is a source of profit, but any profit derived from the rabbit is more than counter-balanced by the injury we suffer from the depredations of the pest. The rabbit is a parasite upon the greatest Australian industry, and we are dealing under this item with a parasitical industry. When the Minister talks of establishing this industry at a cost of £30,000—

Mr. GREENE.—I said that would be sufficient to equip one industry.

Mr. FLEMING.—If we had ten factories costing £30,000 each, the capital invested would not represent more than the price of one large, well-stocked station. It is too ridiculous to think of establishing an industry of this kind at the expense of what is unquestionably the greatest industry in Australia. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that we cannot afford to interfere with the balance of nature. Nature, if left uncontrolled, has destructive methods of its own, and, in my opinion, the use of poison for the destruction of rabbits destroys the balance of nature, and throws everything out of gear. It is not merely a question of the number of rabbits spoiled by the use of poison as compared with the use of traps, but a matter of very much greater moment in the disturbance of the balance of nature, which is the only thing that keeps Australia such a remarkably healthy country for the rearing of stock. Those who are engaged in primary production know that there are fewer pests and diseases affecting primary production in Australia than in any other country.

Mr. GREENE.—The pests we have are pretty bad.

Mr. FLEMING.—I would remind the honorable member that the worst of our pests are imported. I am myself Australian-born, whilst the Minister has come here from overseas.



Mr. GREENE.—The honorable member is quite wrong. The dingo is a native of Australia, and is as big a pest as the rabbit.

Mr. FLEMING. — The interjection shows that the honorable gentleman does not understand the position. While I admit that the dingo is a pest, the injury he does to Australia does not represent a hundredth part of the injury done by the rabbit. The dingo is not nearly so bad a pest as even the prickly pear. I say this although I know that many people are to-day being driven off their holdings, and thousands of acres that used to be devoted to the rearing of sheep are now devoted to the rearing of cattle because of the ravages of the dingo. If we leave things to natural law we shall be able to cope with the rabbit pest; but when men bring along the poison cart, and so disturb the balance of nature, it is difficult to say what will be the ultimate result. I am opposed to this duty because, in my view, it may mean all the difference between the destruction of rabbits by trapping and their destruction by the use of poison, which is one of the most dangerous means that could be adopted.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added (Mr. RICHARD FOSTER's amendment)—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes .. .. .	10
Noes .. .. .	19

Majority .. .. .	9
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#### AYES.

Bowden, E. K.	Jowett, E.
Cook, Robert	Wienholt, A.
Fleming, W. M.	
Foley, G.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Foster, Richard	Bell, G. J.
Gregory, H.	Gibson, W. G.

#### NOES.

Charlton, M.	Maloney, Dr.
Cook, Sir Joseph	Mathews, J.
Corser, E. B. C.	Mooney, Parker
Cunningham, L. L.	Riley, E.
Fenton, J. E.	Rodgers, A. S.
Gabb, J. M.	Smith, Laird
Greene, W. M.	Wise, G. H.
Groom, L. E.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Lamond, Hector	Burchell, R. J.
Lister, J. H.	Story, W. H.

#### PAIRS.

Hill, W. C.	Catts, J. H.
Prowse, J. H.	Jackson, D. S.

Question so resolved in the negative.  
Amendment negatived.

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) agreed to—

That the following words be added:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—

Traps, viz.—

(A) Dog, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.

(B) Rabbit, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent."

Item, as amended, agreed to.

*Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.*

Item 221 (Traps, vermin, n.e.i.) and item 222 (Tubes, collapsible, empty) agreed to.

#### DIVISION VII.—OILS, PAINTS, AND VARNISHES.

Item 223 (Bronzing and metal powders) and item 224 (Graphite of plum-bago, black lead, &c.) agreed to.

Item 225—

French chalk and other preparations of steatite n.e.i., ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.3].—Since the Tariff was framed, an industry for the manufacture of crayons and chalks has been started in Australia, using our own raw materials, and I propose to give it a slight increase in the duty. I move—

That the item be amended by inserting (A) before the word "French," and adding the following:—

(B) Crayons and pastels, including solid lead pencils and school and tailors' chalks.

On and after 17th June, 1921, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.

I understand that the manufacturers will be able to provide practically the whole of the Australian requirements.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 226 (Blacking; dressing and polishes for boots, &c.), item 227 (Tallow and greases), and item 228 (Oils in bulk or otherwise), agreed to.

Item 229—

Oils in vessels exceeding one gallon.

(F) (1) Castor; Turkey red oil; commercial oleic acid; tung and other vegetable paint oils, per gallon, British, 6d.; intermediate, 8d.; general, 8d.

- (2) Linseed, per gallon, British, 6d.; intermediate, 8d.; general, 8d.; or ad val., British, 12½ per cent.; intermediate, 15 per cent.; general, 20 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.6].—I move—

That sub-item (F) be amended by adding the following:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—

- (F) (1) Turkey red oil; commercial oleic acid; tung and other vegetable paint oils n.e.i., per gallon, British, 6d.; intermediate, 8d.; general, 8d.  
(2) Linseed and castor, per gallon, British, 9d.; intermediate, 1s.; general, 1s.

The manufacturers of both linseed and castor oils are experiencing great difficulty in carrying on at present. The position of linseed-oil manufacturers in particular is somewhat difficult owing to the fact that in England, which is the chief competitor, the product is the cake and the by-product the oil, whereas in Australia the oil is the product and the cake the by-product. In England, the cake commands a much higher price than in Australia; and, as 3 tons of linseed produces 2 tons of cake and 1 ton of oil, and as the manufacturers obtain the raw material from the same market as we do, namely, India, they are in a better position to compete in the Australian market in connexion with the production of oil. As far as I am able to judge from a number of letters from manufacturers of paints and varnishes, no material objection will be raised to increasing the duty on linseed oil. I think that 4d. more on the general Tariff, and 3d. more on the British Tariff will give the local manufacturers a reasonable opportunity of carrying on their business. The rearrangement of duty on castor oil is necessary in order to put the manufacturers in a more satisfactory position.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [8.10].—I take it that the Minister (Mr. Greene) has gone carefully into this question, and I am glad to know that some alteration has been made in the item, because in many parts of Australia, and particularly my State, manufacturers are obtaining from local plants oils which are gradually taking the place of the imported article. In Western Australia, one big firm en-

gaged in the manufacture of methyl-alcohol is obtaining a valuable oil by-product from the blackboy tree.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 230 (Oils, including medicinal oils, except essential oils, not compounded) agreed to.

Item 231 (Paints and colours) consequentially amended and agreed to.

Item 232—

- (A) Varnishes; varnish and oil stains; lacquers; Japans, Berlin, Brunswick and stoving blacks and substitutes therefor; liquid sizes; patent knotting; oil and wood finishes; petrifying liquids; lithographic varnish; printers' ink reducer; terebine; liquid dryers; gold size; liquid stain for wood, per gallon, British, 2s. 6d.; intermediate, 3s.; general, 3s. 6d.  
(B) Damp wall compositions including compositions for waterproofing cement, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.13].—I move—

That sub-item (A) be amended by adding the following:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, per gallon, British, 2s. 6d.; intermediate, 3s.; general, 3s. 6d.; or ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher amount of duty."

When we were framing the Tariff it was our intention to insert the *ad valorem* duty to protect the higher grades of varnishes manufactured in this country. The existing duty is sufficient for the lower grades, but it does not adequately protect the better class of varnishes, and we desire to encourage the higher just as much as the lower grade article.

**Mr. GREGORY** (Dampier) [8.15].—Apparently these materials are required in the manufacture of certain goods. If a manufacturer applies to the Minister for these goods to be admitted free under item 404, and his request is granted, will another person who wishes to use the materials for other than manufacturing purposes still have to pay the higher rate of duty prescribed in this item?

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.16].—That would not be done under any circumstances, except in respect of a grade of material that was not manufactured in this country.



For instance, if a special varnish required for the wings of aeroplanes were not being manufactured in Australia, and applications were made to the Department for its admission under item 404, it would probably be allowed in free of duty.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 233 (Liquid removers of paint and varnish) agreed to.

DIVISION VIII.—EARTHENWARE, CEMENT,  
CHINA, GLASS, AND STONE.

Item 234 (Portland cement).

**Mr. CORSER** (Wide Bay) [8.17].—Local manufacturers of cement have represented that the duty provided in the schedule is not sufficient. I know that prior to the war cement was brought out practically as ballast at a freight of £1 per ton. If that was done then, when there was more cargo being sent to Australia than there is likely to be under this Tariff, there will be greater risk of it happening in the future, because vessels coming to the Commonwealth to lift our primary produce will probably carry cement cheaply as ballast. It has been pointed out to me that in other parts of the world the hours worked in the cement industry are sixty-six per week, as against forty-four in Australia, whilst in the local industry time and a half is paid for overtime, and double rates for Sundays. If we desire to make this industry secure, we must protect it against the dumping of a product which has been produced at a considerably less cost than has the local article. The freight from overseas need not be taken into consideration, because it would probably be not greater than the cost of sending cement from Victoria or New South Wales to the north of Queensland or Western Australia.

**Mr. BURCHELL**.—Western Australia has its own cement works now.

**Mr. CORSER**.—The rates of duty provided in this schedule are the same as those in the 1914 Tariff, and I appeal to the Minister (Mr. Greene) to give increased protection to the local industry, especially in view of the danger of cement being used as ballast by vessels coming to Australia.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—If the ships cannot get cargo, what does the honorable member suggest that they should carry as ballast?

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—We shall have to pay pretty high freights on our produce if the ships cannot get cargo of some sort.

**Mr. CORSER**.—At any rate, I do not desire them to carry ballast that will destroy industries which have been established in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and Queensland at very great cost. We experienced the advantage of the local industry during the war, when, if we had been dependent on overseas supplies, we would not have been able to get any cement. During the drought in New South Wales one large cement works suffered severely because for a number of months they had no water for manufacturing purposes, but I believe that provision has now been made for an adequate supply.

**Mr. BURCHELL** (Fremantle) [8.24].—Has the Minister (Mr. Greene) given sufficient consideration to the fact that new cement works have been established quite recently? I believe there are works in the Newcastle district, and there is a new factory in my own electorate. In the 1908 Tariff the duty was 9d. per cwt., and in 1914 1s., the same as is proposed in the schedule now before us. As the Minister has been careful to strengthen so many other industries by affording them additional protection, I should like him to state why he has not increased the duty on cement.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—For months we could not get a cask of cement of any kind.

**Mr. BURCHELL**.—I guarantee that we shall be able to get plenty in future. We have adopted, in respect of many other articles, a new principle, in the form of deferred duties. Will the Minister explain why he has not applied that principle to this item?

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.26].—Representatives of cement companies interviewed me a little time ago, and their only request was that the 1914 rate should not be departed from.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—Hear, hear! Cement was not obtainable anywhere.

Mr. GREENE.—That was the reason why I did not propose any increase in the duty. It was not asked for.

Mr. CORSER.—I have letters which show that an increase is desired.

Mr. GREENE.—I am only stating what happened at the interview between the manufacturers and myself. When framing the Tariff, I made inquiries to ascertain whether the duties would be sufficient, and the extent to which the local manufacturers were able to meet the demands. During the last few years there have been enormous developments in the plants manufacturing cement in this country. The great shortage of cement during last year was due, not so much to the inability of local plants to cope with the demand as to the fact that because of shipping strikes and industrial disturbances the cement works could not carry on, and although they had a capacity of over 350,000 tons per annum, they were not able to produce more than 260,000 tons. New companies have been formed in Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania, and, in addition, almost every one of the existing companies has taken steps to nearly double its output. The prospects are that before the end of 1921 the capacity of Australian cement plants will be nearly 700,000 tons. This will be increased by nearly 100,000 tons in 1922 by the operations of the Tasmanian Cement Company. In all probability, the shortage will be entirely overcome this year; and, next year, unless there is some increase in building operations, the output of Australian cement works will be, I believe, greater than the actual requirement.

Mr. FOLEY.—There are plenty of countries near Australia to which the surplus can be sent.

Mr. GREENE.—I have no doubt that there will be a market for it. In view of the facts I have related, I see no necessity for increasing the duty.

Mr. CORSER (Wide Bay) [8.30].—I have the following extract from *Rock Products*, dated 5th July, 1919:—

In 1916 there were in Japan, twenty companies manufacturing cement, employing an aggregate labour force of 6,444 persons, of whom 692 were females. The output of these companies increased from 4,772,579 barrels, valued at \$9,957,798, in 1916, to 5,398,918 barrels, valued at \$15,758,401 in 1917. Values of

cement exported in 1916, 1917, and 1918, amounted to \$1,355,514, \$1,335,065, and \$2,996,065 respectively.

I am afraid that while Japan is increasing its output so rapidly, Australian companies may be very seriously handicapped by the dumping of Japanese cement here. They would appreciate an assurance from the Minister (Mr. Greene) that if any such dumping be attempted he will apply the provisions of the anti-dumping legislation, which he informed the Committee will apply in regard to iron and steel products. Local manufacturers need the Australian market to enable them to stabilize their industry. They say that there will be no attempt to raise the price; and I have it on the best authority that when the industry is stabilized, which must first be done, there will be a reduction in price.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.32].—If conditions arise under which cement is being dumped in Australia in an unfair way—that is to say, if it is sold in Australia at less than the home consumption price, the anti-dumping provisions will apply.

Mr. FENTON.—The home consumption price in Japan may be very low.

Mr. GREENE.—I venture to say that the home consumption price is the world's price at that particular period. If Japanese manufacturers are dumping cement into Australia at a price lower than the world's price, or in any unfair way, the anti-dumping provisions will apply.

Item agreed to.

Items 235 (Asphalt mastic), and 236 (Scientific apparatus, porcelain), agreed to.

Item 237—

(A) China and parian ware, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

(B) Porcelain ware, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

Mr. GREGORY (Dampier) [8.34].—Would the Minister (Mr. Greene) be prepared to consider an increase in the general rate to 45 per cent., and a reduction in the British rate to 15 per cent.? The natural protection already affords a very reasonable margin.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [8.35].—We have



the clays here, and the manufacture of china and porcelain ware is a natural industry which I am anxious to see developed, because it may become very valuable to the Commonwealth. In the circumstances, I am not disposed to consent to any reduction in the duty.

**Mr. MATHEWS** (Melbourne Ports) [8.36].—During the war, in order to meet the demand for this class of ware, an attempt was made to produce it in Australia, and met with a fair amount of success, particularly in respect to the manufacture of porcelain insulators to meet the requirements of the Postal Department. Previously Government officials had been rather diffident about affording to the local manufacturers that assistance which would enable them to meet the requirements of the Department; but that diffidence has now been overcome. Of course, if I ask for an increase I am met with the answer that the local manufacturers have been producing these wares for some time past; but, as I have already shown in regard to other local products, although during the war, and until quite recently, sufficient natural protection was afforded to enable the local makers to continue their operations, all the nations of the world which are now beginning to resuscitate their pre-war industries, may be in a position to flood our markets with their products if the local man is not afforded some further protection. When the Minister (Mr. Greene) was approached by the people associated with this trade, did he not recognise that the duties he has provided in the schedule were not likely to give any security to the local industry? Was it not shown to him that the inadequacy of the proposed rates would soon be proved when other nations revived their pre-war industries, and did he not consider the advisability of increasing the rate under the general division?

**Mr. GREENE**.—I did take that matter into consideration, but I do not think I ought to give any higher duty except in regard to certain classes of insulators.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—If I can assure the Minister that he would be supported in any attempt to increase the general rate on this item by honorable members on this side of the Chamber, can he tell me the temper of honorable members sitting

behind him in respect to adding a further 10 per cent. to the duty?

**Mr. FOLEY**.—We cannot give it.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—Surely the honorable member will agree that it would not be an additional charge upon the cost of mining operations. The primary producers cannot say that it would be an impost particularly aimed at them. I have a good deal of information before me, and could elaborate extensively on the excellent qualities of Australian clays.

**Mr. RICHARD FOSTER**.—In this item you have a natural protection.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—Natural protection does not exist in this instance, because the Japanese are our competitors, and are in a position to ship their products to Australia at very low rates.

**Mr. JOWETT**.—Is the honorable member asking for an increase in the general rate?

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—Yes. If we encourage the manufacture of the higher grades of clay products there is nothing to prevent Australian industries exhaustively undertaking the manufacture of other articles made from clays. This is an industry that could be successfully conducted, not only in the cities, but in country districts, and would be a means of giving employment in outside centres, as has been the case in the Old World. I came from the south-western portion of Britain, where china clay of a high standard is produced, and am fully conversant with the possibilities of this industry. It would be a difficult matter to enumerate the different uses to which clay can be put. I trust the Minister will give careful consideration to the arguments I have adduced, and will consent to the general Tariff rate being increased by 10 per cent. The manufacture of porcelain ware should be extended. Is the Minister prepared to increase the rate?

**Mr. GREENE**.—I cannot do it.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—Will the Minister agree to an increase of 5 per cent.?

**Mr. GREENE**.—No.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—Western Australia is as rich in clay as any other State in the Commonwealth.

**Mr. GREGORY.**—They are producing better material there than in any other part of Australia.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—I am glad to hear it, and I hope to have the support of the honorable member for Dampier (Mr. Gregory) in the proposal I am submitting.

**Mr. GREGORY.**—The manufacturers are quite satisfied with the present duties.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—Surely the honorable member will support me in this instance; he cannot say that an increased duty under this item will be a special charge upon the farming community.

**Mr. GREGORY.**—I do not think it is needed. The honorable member has not shown it to be necessary.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—I hope that the honorable member for Dampier is not in favour of goods produced in cheap labour countries entering Australia to compete with those manufactured by our own people. During the war we were unprepared to meet our requirements of iron, wool, and timber, but we were in a hopeless position as regards cotton and clay products. During the war period the women of Australia found it practically impossible to purchase many articles manufactured from china, and this is our opportunity of encouraging local industries so that we shall be in a position to meet all demands.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK.**—We do not make china here.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—No, its production has been neglected to a serious extent, and the Acting Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Cook), I am sure, realizes that china products are greatly in demand. This is an industry which should receive every assistance, and though I appear to be merely "beating the air," I again ask the Minister if he cannot accede to my request.

**Mr. JOWETT** (Grampians) [8.53].—If it be the desire of the honorable member for Melbourne Ports (Mr. Mathews) to increase the general rate by 10 per cent., and not to interfere with the British rate, I shall support him.

**Mr. MATHEWS.**—That is my desire.

**Mr. JOWETT.**—This is an instance in which it has been clearly shown that a large proportion of our requirements come from abroad, and not from Great

Britain. Here we have an opportunity of increasing the British preference by 10 per cent., and I hope the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) will take that into consideration.

**Mr. GIBSON.**—So he has.

**Mr. JOWETT.**—I do not consider that the present rates show adequate preference to British commodities. The preference to Great Britain should be at least double what it is, and I shall support the honorable member for Melbourne Ports in his proposal to increase the general Tariff to 50 per cent.

**Mr. FENTON** (Maribyrnong) [8.55].—Of course industries are stabbed at from abroad in a manner that at times does them injury. I have communications before me showing the competition we are subjected to in Australia. One does not wish to speak in unfriendly terms concerning the activities of other nations; but we have to remember that in some countries the workmen are paid low wages, and work long hours, and it is time this Parliament made a stand in preventing competition of this sort. Prior to the war Germany commanded practically the whole of this trade, and when she lost it Britain began to pay greater attention to the manufacture of china and porcelain ware. When capital was invested in British industries, the Government subsidized them to such an extent that I believe they are now able to compete with the German product, that is, of course, if it is not "dumped." In Australia we are in close proximity to another country, whose shipbuilding operations have been on an extensive scale, and which owns a mercantile marine which is specially charged with the conveyance of goods manufactured in that country—I refer, of course, to Japan. This makes her a very serious competitor. The advantage Japan receives in consequence of her proximity to Australia, and the conditions under which goods are shipped, places her in a fortunate position, quite apart from the benefits Japanese manufacturers derive in consequence of cheaper production. If white men working in civilized conditions are to be properly protected, our local industries will have to be considered. Quite recently local manufacturers in this industry suffered in competition with Japanese manufacturers. Tenders were



called for the supply of insulators for the city of Maryborough, in Queensland, and when tenders were received there was some doubt as to whether the insulators to be supplied under the accepted tender were of Japanese manufacture, and on inquiries being made the tenderer said that such was the case.

Mr. FOLEY.—Who accepted the tender?

Mr. FENTON.—I presume the civic authorities. Information has been received that Australian manufacturers of insulators—which come under this item—have had to compete with goods coming from Japan, and unless we stand behind our Australian industries and protect them from this sort of competition they must go under. The Acting Prime Minister (Sir Joseph Cook), with his previous Free Trade predilections, would, I believe, stand up—especially in view of our experience during the war period—and say that it is time we protected our Australian industries.

Mr. WIENHOLT.—Protect them from whom?

Mr. FENTON.—The Japanese. Surely the honorable member for Moreton is in favour of that. We require insulators for our telephonic and telegraphic systems, and for a long time we have had to fight in this House to get the officials in the Postmaster-General's Department to admit that those manufactured in Australia were good enough for the Postal Department. Now we have achieved that proud distinction, and to-day we are producing, not second or third-rate insulators, but an article that is not only equal, but in some cases superior, to those manufactured in other parts of the world.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I do not like the way this item is made up. I think china should be separated from the rest.

Mr. FENTON.—I am referring more particularly to porcelain goods.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—We do not make china in Australia.

Mr. FENTON.—We have made a series of successful attempts with Australian clays, and in different parts of the Commonwealth we have varying types quite equal to any found elsewhere. The raw materials are at our feet, and other nations have been laughing at Australia because we have shown such inactivity in

erecting factories and machinery for the manufacture of goods which we consume, and which are imported. In my own constituency we were fortunate in having a man bearing a foreign name—he was a German—who has some knowledge of the manufacture of china and porcelain ware. There was some trouble concerning this man, but he was a peace-loving individual, and left his country because he did not believe in the conditions under which he was working, and in the manner in which he was governed. A company was formed and, at Sunshine, they have been turning out cups and saucers and other lines of porcelain ware equal to anything in the world. This man has been instructing young Australians, with every prospect of firmly establishing one other phase of Australian industry. But, against the competition under conditions existing to-day, the enterprise cannot make a successful stand. Cannot the Minister see his way clear to agree to a greater measure of protection?

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Forty per cent. is pretty substantial.

Mr. FENTON.—The war taught even Great Britain that she must no longer look to Germany to supply her with goods of this class. She has decided to make them for herself.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.2].—I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—

(A) China and parian ware, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 50 per cent.

(B) Porcelain ware, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 50 per cent."

The acceptance of this amendment will necessitate a corresponding amendment in the item dealing with "earthenware," since there are certain classes of these manufactures which approximate so closely that, when they involve matters of administration, we cannot tell one from another.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 238 (Roasting dishes, &c.) agreed to.

Item 239—

Fire and glazed bricks; bricks n.e.i.; fire lumps; fireclay manufactures n.e.i., ad val.,

British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.

**Mr. MATHEWS** (Melbourne Ports) [9.4].—I ask for an increase of the duties, including those upon British products, to 25, 35, and 45 per cent. respectively. The manufacture of many of the different lines of glazed products is a fine art, and why should we not encourage the expansion of the industry here?

**Mr. GREENE**.—I have considered the question, and these rates show increases of 5 per cent. and 10 per cent. on the intermediate and general rates in the 1914 schedule. As a matter of fact, the importations are very small.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—This is bulky stuff, and there is a great deal of natural protection afforded thereby.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—There is nothing in the argument about natural protection.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—It costs a lot to bring these bricks out from the Old Country. However, the honorable member ought to be satisfied, since the Minister has indicated that he will agree to an increase of 5 per cent. on the intermediate and general Tariffs.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.5].—As a matter of fact, I had not made any such promise. However, I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent."

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [9.7].—Before the extra duty is agreed to, I would like to be assured that the additional measure of protection will not mean merely so much the more profit for the Australian manufacturer by reason of his advancing prices.

**Mr. GREENE**.—Practically all the importations come from the United Kingdom, and the British preferential rate is not being amended.

**Mr. FOLEY**.—It is all very well to encourage Australian industry; but we do not wish the encouragement to be abused by the needless raising of prices, or by middlemen getting an extra "cut."

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 240 (Mosaic flooring, &c.) agreed to.

Item 241—

Earthenware, viz.:—

- (A) Spurs, stilts, and thimbles, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.
- (B) Earthenware, brownware, and stoneware, including glazed or enamelled fireclay manufactures, n.e.i., ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.12].—I move—

That sub-item (B) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—

- (B) Earthenware, brownware, and stoneware, including glazed or enamelled fireclay manufactures, n.e.i., and all kinds of porous insulating blocks, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 50 per cent."

I desire to include all kinds of porous insulating blocks. Really, my purpose is to get over a departmental difficulty; but I also wish to increase the general Tariff to 50 per cent., as I indicated would be necessary a few minutes ago.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 242 (Glass), and item 243 (Glass, n.e.i.), agreed to.

Item 244—

Glass, viz.:—

- (A) Lenses, n.e.i.; locket, brooch, and watch glasses, ad val., British, free, intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 20 per cent.
- (B) Lenses, edged, for spectacles, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.13].—I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—

- (A) Lenses, n.e.i.; locket, brooch, and watch glasses, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 10 per cent.
- (B) Blanks, fused, for bifocal lenses; and bifocal lenses partly or wholly finished, including such lenses imported in frames, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."
- (C) Lenses, edged, for spectacles, except bifocal lenses, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 35 per cent."

The lenses, of course, are not made here at all. Therefore, I have proposed to reduce the general rate. My purpose, further, is



to split up the grouping of lenses for spectacles, so as to separate the bifocal, which are made here, and to place upon them a higher rate of duty.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—I object to this proposal. The lenses in my glasses are bifocal.

Mr. GREENE.—As a matter of fact, it was the Acting Prime Minister who brought this very matter under my notice.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 245 (Glass, &c.), item 246 (Scientific apparatus, glass), item 247 (Screens, process engravers'), item 248 (Tubes and rods of resistant glass), agreed to.

Item 249 (Mica).

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [9.16].—It seems to me that the difference between the duties upon the raw material and the finished article, which amounts to only 10 per cent., is scarcely sufficient.

Mr. GREENE.—I think that it is quite sufficient.

Dr. MALONEY.—Very well.

Item agreed to.

Item 250—

Bottles, flasks, and jars over 5 drams fluid capacity, fancy, ground, or cut glass, empty or containing goods not subject to ad val. duty, provided the bottles, flasks, and jars ground only in the neck for the purpose of fitting the stopper shall not be deemed ground; glass stoppers; glassware n.e.i.; thermometers, other than clinical, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.17].—I move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—Bottles, flasks, and jars over 8 drams fluid capacity, fancy, ground, or cut glass, empty or containing goods not subject to ad val. duty, provided that bottles, flasks, and jars ground only in the neck for the purpose of fitting the stopper shall not be deemed ground; glassware n.e.i.; thermometers, other than clinical, ad val., British, 25 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 40 per cent."

The reason for the amendment is that the smaller bottle is not manufactured in Australia.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Is that the Minister's departmental information?

Mr. GREENE.—Yes.

Mr. MATHEWS.—I thought that arrangements had been made for the manufacture of the smaller bottles.

Mr. GREENE.—In future it will be the 1-oz. bottle that we shall start with. There is no alteration in the rate of duty proposed upon bottles of the larger size, but we wish to admit bottles of less than 8 drams fluid capacity free.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 251—

Bottle stoppers, n.e.i.; glass bottle marbles, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.20].—In this item I desire to group all bottle stoppers n.e.i. So far as I am aware, there are no bottle stoppers which are not being made in Australia. I therefore move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, Bottle stoppers—(A) Crown corks and all other bottle stoppers, including stoppers for re-sealing but not including glass-bottle marbles and goods classified under item 395, ad val., British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent. (B) Glass-bottle marbles, ad val., British, free; intermediate, 5 per cent.; general, 15 per cent."

I am proposing the omission of glass-bottle marbles because I wish them to be admitted free. The duty upon Crown corks will be—British, 35 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 45 per cent.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 252—

Bottles, flasks, jars, vials, and tubes, empty, of glass, earthenware, stoneware, or china—

(A) Up to and including a capacity of 5 fluid drams, ad val., British, free; intermediate, free; general, 15 per cent.

(B) N.E.I., including glass caps for fruit jars, ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 35 per cent.; general, 40 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.22].—I desire to secure an amendment of this item to make it harmonize with the amendment which I moved in item 250, where the Committee agreed to make the minimum-size bottle which is to be admitted free 8 fluid drams instead of 5 drams. I therefore move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—(A) Up to and including a capacity of 8 fluid drams, ad val., British, free; intermediate, free; general, 15 per cent."

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 253—

Bottles, flasks, jars, vials, and tubes, of glass, earthenware, stoneware, or china, containing goods not subject to an ad valorem duty, and not classified under item 408—

- (A) Up to and including a capacity of 5 fluid drams, per dozen, British, free; intermediate, 2d.; general, 3d.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.23].—I desire to insert a similar amendment in this item, and I therefore move—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921—(A) Up to and including a capacity of 8 fluid drams, per dozen, British, free; intermediate, 2d.; general, 3d."

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment (by **Mr. GREENE**) agreed to—

That the item be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, (B) Over 8 drams and not exceeding 10 oz. fluid capacity, per dozen, British, 2d.; intermediate, 3d.; general, 4d."

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 254—

- (A) Shellac, sandarac, mastic, and other dry gums, n.e.i., ad val., British, free; intermediate, free; general, 10 per cent.

- (B) Dextrine, ad val., British, 15 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 25 per cent.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.25].—I move—

That sub-item (A) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, free."

These gums do not come from Great Britain.

**Mr. RILEY**.—They compete with our gelatine works.

**Mr. GREENE**.—Not those which come under sub-item A. None of those gums, I repeat, come from Great Britain. They are used in various manufacturing processes, and I think that they should be admitted free.

**Mr. RILEY** (South Sydney) [9.27].—I am sure that the dry gum of which I have a sample here comes into competition with our gelatine. It is used in the manufacture of lollies. I think that the Minister would do well to impose a duty upon dry gums, which, I am informed, come into serious competition with our gelatine manufacturers.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.28].—My information is that dry gum does not come into competition with anything that is being done in Australia to-day. In the future, it is possible that some new process may be developed and that this gum may then come into definite competition with our own manufacturers. If, upon further examination, I find that it is necessary to levy a duty upon dry gum, I will either recommit the item or make arrangements for the matter to be raised later on. I feel certain that no injury will be done to any local industry by the adoption of my amendment.

**Mr. WATKINS** (Newcastle) [9.29].—The manufacturers of gelatine ask that gums which are used in the manufacture of confectionery, or as adhesives, shall be subject to the same duty as gelatine. That seems to me to be a fair request. Dry gum is used to mix with gelatine for the manufacture of jubes. The importation which I hold in my hand is described as Soudan gum, from Arabia, and it comes into competition with gelatine. According to the statement before me, it is used in the manufacture of lollies and adhesives.

**Sir JOSEPH COOK**.—Do the manufacturers say so?

**Mr. WATKINS**.—Yes, the statement before me comes from the manufacturers. There is in the electorate of Hunter a large factory engaged in the production of gelatine.

**Mr. GREENE** (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.31].—I think the honorable member for Newcastle (**Mr. Watkins**) is confusing this with the next item, which deals with all prepared adhesives. The gums mentioned there come into direct competition with gelatine, but the gums included in this item, so far as my information goes, do not come into competition with gelatine in any shape or form.

**Mr. CHARLTON**.—If the honorable gentleman finds later on that they do, he will recommit the item?

**Mr. GREENE**.—Yes, if I find I am wrong, I shall do so.

**Mr. FOLEY** (Kalgoorlie) [9.34].—While I appreciate the fact that the next



item deals with the gums in which the honorable member for Newcastle (Mr. Watkins) is interested, I would point out to the Committee that the gums mentioned in this item enter into competition with a gum which is being produced in Western Australia from the blackboy tree, and is used in the manufacture of spirit varnishes and various lacquers. I have here a sample of that gum, which is produced in sufficient quantities in Western Australia to satisfy a big want there, and the industry, if encouraged, will be able to meet the requirements of the whole Commonwealth. The Minister (Mr. Greene) is making a mistake in making these dry gums free. He should at least provide for a duty of 10 per cent. in respect of imports from Great Britain, and 20 per cent. under the general Tariff. I shall deal with the matter fully when we reach the item relating to methyl alcohol. I ask honorable members to give some little encouragement to this industry in Western Australia. It is not denuding our forests, but is using up what is really a pest.

Mr. FENTON. — Do not the Japanese import that gum from Western Australia?

Mr. FOLEY. — No, this local manufacture should take the place of a gum which is imported from Japan.

Mr. GREENE. — I will look into the matter mentioned by the honorable member, and, if necessary, will recommend the item.

Amendment agreed to.

Item, as amended, agreed to

Item 255—

(A) Glue, in dry form, per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2d.; general, 3d.; or ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher duty.

(C) Gelatine of all kinds, per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2d.; general, 3d.; or ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 25 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher duty.

Mr. WATKINS (Newcastle) [9.37].— I understand that the honorable member for South Sydney (Mr. Riley) desires an amendment of this item, which relates to

gelatines that compete with a local industry. That industry is in a bad way owing to the competition of a foreign product made from cheaper gum. I ask the Minister to grant a reasonable increase on what appears to be the very moderate duty on gelatine of all kinds.

Mr. RILEY.—We should like the duty to be increased to 45 per cent.

Mr. GREENE (Richmond—Minister for Trade and Customs) [9.39].—There is one thing that is necessary when we interfere with these duties. Whatever duty we impose on glue, we must impose on gelatine, and *vice versa*. Here, again, there are grades of glue and gelatine where they approximate so closely that, short of a chemical analysis, it is impossible to tell whether the article is glue or gelatine. I need hardly say that both glue and gelatine are made from waste products. Gelatine is made from scraps of hides, and what is more or less the refuse of the tanneries. I am prepared to meet honorable members opposite to a certain extent. I move—

That sub-item (A) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, per lb., British, 2d.; intermediate, 3d.; general, 4d.; or ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher duty."

I shall move a similar amendment to sub-item c.

Mr. RILEY.—The amendment does not give all that I want, but I am prepared to accept it.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) agreed to—

That sub-item (c) be amended by adding the following words:—"And on and after 17th June, 1921, per lb., British, 2d.; intermediate, 3d.; general, 4d.; or ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 30 per cent.; general, 35 per cent.; whichever rate returns the higher duty."

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 256 (Printing roller composition); item 257 (Slate slabs); item 258 (Wrought slate, n.e.i.); item 259 (Roofing slates); item 260 (Bath bricks); item 261 (Emery, oil, and whetstones); item 262 (Stone and marble); and item 263 (Pestles and mortars); agreed to.

## DIVISION IX.—DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.

## Item 264—

Pyroligneous acid, acetic acid, and vinegar . . . . .

(c) Containing more than 30 per cent. of absolute acetic acid for every 10 per cent. or part thereof. . . . .

Amendment (by Mr. GREENE) agreed to—

That sub-item (c) be amended by inserting after the word "every" the word "extra".

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Item 265 (Acids); item 266 (Coal tar products); item 267 (Tar, pitch); and item 268 (Naphthalene); agreed to.

## Item 269—

(A) Sheep, cattle, and horse washes in liquid or powder form, ad val., British, 20 per cent.; intermediate, 20 per cent.; general, 30 per cent.

(B) Insecticides and disinfectants. . . . .

(C) . . . . .

Mr. BOWDEN (Nepean) [9.45].—In the fruit-growing industry, and especially in apple growing, a spray called by the trade "black leaf forty" is used. It is not made here, and I understand cannot be made here. It is made from an inferior kind of tobacco leaf.

Mr. GREENE.—I am going to make all nicotine sprays free.

Mr. BOWDEN.—That is quite satisfactory.

Mr. FLEMING (Robertson) [9.46].—I am glad the Minister has made that announcement, because it relieves me of half the burden I was going to take up.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Hear, hear! I was sharpening my axe for him, too.

Mr. FLEMING.—The right honorable gentleman must have whispered a word into the Minister's ear, because in his district, and all the districts around it, nicotine sprays are certainly of great value.

But another matter of very great importance is the question of sheep, cattle, and horse washes in liquid or powder form. A little while ago we had a great deal of trouble concerning sheep dip. Any one interested in primary production, and particularly in the production of wool, which is the chief product of Australia, knows that we must have the best sheep dips if we are to produce the best wool. Whatever may be the actual experience of other honorable members, my own, as

a wool-grower, has been that our Australian dips are not up to the best standard.

Mr. JOWETT.—Steady!

Mr. GREENE.—You have Coopers here now.

Mr. FLEMING.—Personally I do not care for Coopers' dip. That is, of course, a matter of opinion, and I know that the honorable member for Grampians (Mr. Jowett), who has had a great deal more to do with the matter than ever I had, believes that some of the local dips are good. I have had a fairly extensive experience with dips, and can say, without in any way wishing to injure the Australian product, because I believe in using Australian products whenever I can get them of equal quality with the imported, that the Australian dip has never, in my experience, met the full requirements of the market. It is very good in districts where you simply wish to deal with pests, where you dip your sheep merely to kill insects, and possibly keep the fly off; but where you are dipping, not only for those purposes, but also to improve the quality of the wool, then I think that most men who have had experience will agree that the imported dips have stood far and away above the Australian.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Does the honorable member say that they dip solely to improve the quality of the wool?

Mr. FLEMING.—I did not say "solely," although I have known it done solely for that purpose. But where they dip chiefly for that reason, some of the imported dips have been far beyond the Australian. I have on quite a number of occasions seen sheep dipped, and have helped to dip thousands, purely for the purpose of improving the fleece. If you use the right dip it has a very beneficial effect, and is a paying proposition.

Sir JOSEPH COOK.—Is it like using brilliantine?

Mr. FLEMING.—It keeps the wool cleaner and improves the tip of the wool very much. When the sheep are out under natural conditions, a certain amount of waste takes place on the tip of the wool; but if the sheep are dipped at the right time, a great deal of what is technically known as waste in the tip of the wool is eliminated. For that reason quite a number of people have in the past dipped their sheep purely for the purpose



of improving the wool; but in nearly all cases dipping is resorted to for the twofold purpose of keeping the animals clean and improving the wool at the same time.

I have not had much experience with cattle dips, but have been told by quite a number who have used them that most of the Australian dips are too severe.

Mr. JOWETT.—I had fifteen bullocks killed the other day. I do not think it was an Australian dip that did that. I think it was an imported dip.

Mr. FLEMING.—I am pretty sure, from what I have seen and heard, that if the honorable member inquires closely into the case he will find that it was some crudely manufactured Australian dip. Some of our dips are very good, but they have not yet come up to the standard of the best imported.

The primary producer has quite enough burden to carry without having to pay more for his dips. We have imposed upon him additional expense for all his improvements in the way of his fencing wire, galvanized iron, and things of that kind. We have added to the cost of all his implements and increased to a remarkable degree the cost of his fencing. We have even this evening put an additional charge on his rabbit traps and other appliances for keeping down pests. It seems to me that we have put quite enough, and far too much, upon the primary production of this country. I do ask the Minister (Mr. Greene) to give the man on the land some consideration in connexion with dips. I know that one or two firms have been using the whole of their strength and influence in order to get their industry bolstered up.

Mr. MATHEWS.—They have not bribed me yet.

Mr. FLEMING.—I do not insinuate that any one has been bribed. I know the honorable member is only joking; but some people take up a remark of that sort seriously. So far as my experience has gone in connexion with the Tariff, the finger of scorn cannot be pointed at any one on either side of the House. I believe this schedule is being put through with absolutely clean hands.

I urge the Minister not to jeopardize further this tremendous wool-growing industry of ours for the sake of minor in-

dustries. We have already added enormously to the burden of the wool producer. Every man is aware that, with the charges imposed on the wool-grower even before the passage of this Tariff, it does not pay to grow wool at present prices. That is rather a serious statement to make; but every man interested in wool-growing will, I think, agree with me that, at the average price of wool as fixed here a little while ago, in connexion with the Bawra scheme, it would not pay to grow wool. Since we put that arrangement through this House a number of additional burdens have been imposed, and now along comes the Minister, advised, no doubt, by people not practically interested in wool-growing, but directly interested in sheep dip, to impose another burden which will reduce the quality of our fine merino wool.

It would not matter so much for Australia, as a whole, if the effect of this impost was likely to be reflected only in the poorer qualities of wool. It would certainly be very important to the individual wool-growers, but this matter goes even further than that, because while the man who grows inferior wool will have it still further lessened in value, the high-class wool, for which Australia has become famous all over the world, will be apt also to receive a check. We cannot afford to do anything which will in any way lessen the value of our high-class clip. That is the one thing above all others for which Australia has made a name.

Mr. GREENE.—What do you think it would cost per sheep?

Mr. FLEMING.—I could not say off-hand.

Mr. GREENE.—Does the honorable member think it would be more than a farthing?

Mr. FLEMING.—The actual dipping of sheep used to cost over 1d. per head, but nowadays it would probably cost nearer 3d. I do not know what this charge will amount to.

Mr. GREENE.—Less than ½d. per sheep.

Mr. FLEMING.—Even if that is so, the man who has to dip from 20,000 to 35,000 sheep begins to consider the consequences. Very often the sheep are dipped more than once in a year. In fact, the dip is used in



many cases throughout the whole course of the year, more particularly to keep away the flies. I urge the Minister to reconsider this matter and reduce the duty to 10 per cent. British, leaving the intermediate at 20 per cent., and putting the general Tariff up, if he likes, to 40 per cent. or 50 per cent., because the only dips that really matter to us—the only ones which we consider completely outclass our own—are the British. I have already urged on more than one occasion, and will continue to urge, that we should give as much preference as possible to the Old Country; but in this case it is not so much a question of preference to Great Britain as that we want to maintain the standard for which we are noted everywhere, as the producers of the greatest quantity of first class wool that the world handles.

**Mr. CORSER** (Wide Bay) [9.56].—I propose to urge the Minister (Mr. Greene) to increase the duty on this item. Honorable members are doubtless aware that during the war pressure was brought to bear to increase the production of dips within Australia, and encouragement was given to certain firms to expect protection if they supplied the quantity required for Australian wool-growers, &c. This promise brought William Cooper and nephews from England to establish their industry in Australia.

**Mr. GREGORY**.—Who gave that promise?

**Mr. CORSER**.—I do not say that it was a direct promise, because that could be given only by this Parliament, but there was an understanding, as there was in regard to a number of matters during war time. The undertaking was that, as far as the Government were concerned, if the local manufacturers met the requirement of the Commonwealth they would be encouraged. There are now in Australia no fewer than twelve manufacturers of dips. I do not care what any honorable member says to the contrary—I have known dips ever since the first cattle tick was brought into Australia—no dip has given more satisfaction for cattle than the Royal cattle dip. It is absolutely adequate. Nothing better has been introduced from overseas. I can

also assure the Committee that Victor Leggo's cattle dip and sheep dip are equal to anything that has been imported.

**Mr. FLEMING**.—No, they are not.

**Mr. CORSER**.—Many people are by nature conservative. If they have had their clothes made by a certain tailor, they think no other tailor can make them as well. That has been the case in connexion with dips. From practical experience I am sure that this industry deserves to be encouraged in order that, no matter what happens, the best quality of dip may be produced here for the requirements of this great continent. A large quantity of the material used in dip making is imported. We have increased the duties on that considerably, and if we are to protect the industry at all we must increase the duty on this item; otherwise, the overseas manufacturer will be able to compete unfairly with us in Australia. It is not as if we were at the mercy of one or two firms, because already twelve firms are, I believe, established in the Commonwealth who can meet, and are meeting, all our requirements. Many honorable members consider Thomas' a good dip, and that article is manufactured here. Some time ago there was an outcry against the Ministry for preventing the importation of Cooper's dip, but Coopers have now established works here, and make a dip of the same quality as that which they used to send here from overseas. It must not be forgotten that the bulk of the materials used for the manufacture of sheep dip are dutiable at high rates; and I hope the Minister will increase the protection on dip by at least 5 per cent. to make up for that.

**Mr. MATHEWS**.—He should do so, or reduce the rates on the raw material.

**Mr. CORSER**.—We have already dealt with the duties on the raw material. I do not occupy time in this chamber unduly, but I consider it my duty, on matters of vital importance, such as this, to speak strongly. Doubtless the Minister has been approached by others in regard to this matter, and I hope that he will see his way to give adequate protection.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.







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*Chairman of Committees*—The Honorable John Moore Chanter.

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Bell, George John, C.M.G., Darwin (T.)	Jowett, Edmund .. Grampians (V.)
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Chapman, Hon. Austin .. Eden-Monaro	Maxwell, George Arnot .. Fawknor (V.)
(N.S.W.)	<sup>1</sup> McDonald, Hon. Charles .. Kennedy (Q.)
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Cook, Robert .. Indi (V.)	Page, Earle Christmas Cowper (N.S.W.)
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(N.S.W.)	West, John Edward .. East Sydney
Higgs, Hon. William Guy Capricornia (Q.)	(N.S.W.)
Hill, Hon. Caldwell .. Echuca (V.)	Wienholt, Arnold .. Moreton (Q.)
	Wise, Hon. George Henry .. Gippsland (V.)

1. Sworn 27th February, 1920. — 2. Sworn 3rd March, 1920. — 3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 4th March, 1920. — 4. Made affirmation, 5th March, 1920. — 5. Election declared void, 2nd June, 1920. — 6. Elected 10th July, 1920. — 7. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 13th May, 1920. — 8. Expelled and seat declared vacant, 12th November, 1920. — 9. Elected 18th December, 1920. — 10. Deceased reported, 3rd June, 1921.

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**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (JOINT).**—Senator Bolton, Senator Buzacott, and Senator J. D. Millen.

**PUBLIC WORKS.**—(JOINT).—Senator Foll, Senator Newland, and Senator Plain.

**SENATE OFFICIALS: SELECT COMMITTEE.**—Senator de Largie, Senator Drake-Brockman, Senator Duncan, Senator Earle, Senator Elliott, Senator Reid, and Senator Senior. Progress report presented 12th May, 1921.

\* Appointed 14th April, 1921.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

**STANDING ORDERS.**—Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Charlton, Mr. Fowler, and Mr. Tudor.

**LIBRARY.**—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Anstey, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Higgs, Mr. Lamond, Mr. Mackay, Dr. Maloney, Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. McDonald.

**HOUSE.**—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Foster, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Livingston, Mr. Mathews, Mr. James Page, Mr. Rodgers, and Mr. Watkins.

**PRINTING.**—Mr. Bamford, Mr. Bowden, Mr. Corser, Mr. Fenton, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Riley, and Mr. West.

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (JOINT).**—Mr. Bayley, Mr. Charlton, Mr. Fenton, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Prowse, and Mr. West.

**PUBLIC WORKS (JOINT).**—Mr. Atkinson\*, Mr. Bamford, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Jackson†, Mr. Mackay, Mr. Mathews, and Mr. Parker Moloney.

**SEA CARRIAGE SELECT COMMITTEE.**—Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Burchell, Mr. Corser, Mr. Foster, Mr. Mahony, Mr. McWilliams, and Mr. Watkins. Final report presented 20th October, 1920.

\* Resigned 12th May, 1921.

Appointed 19th May, 1921.